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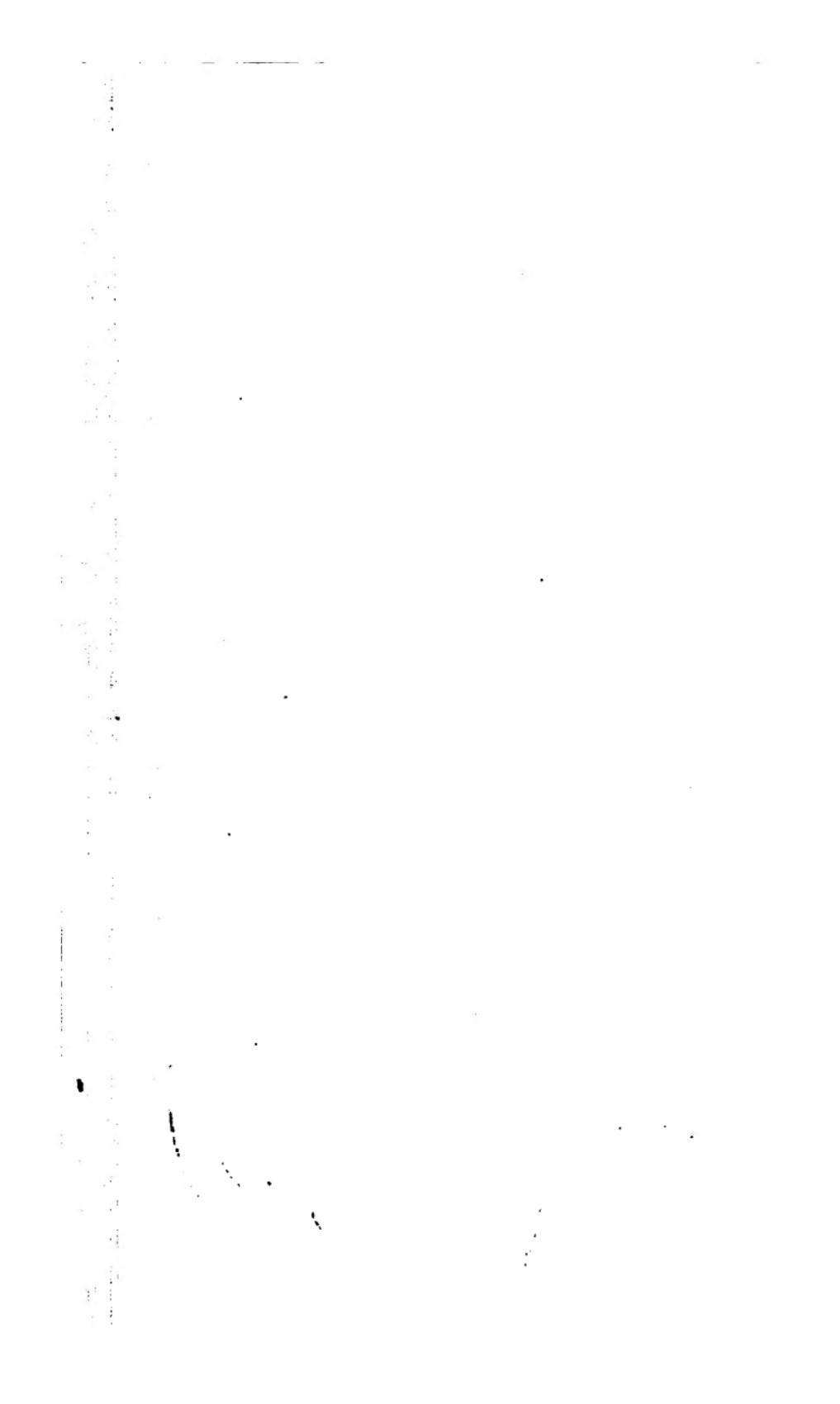
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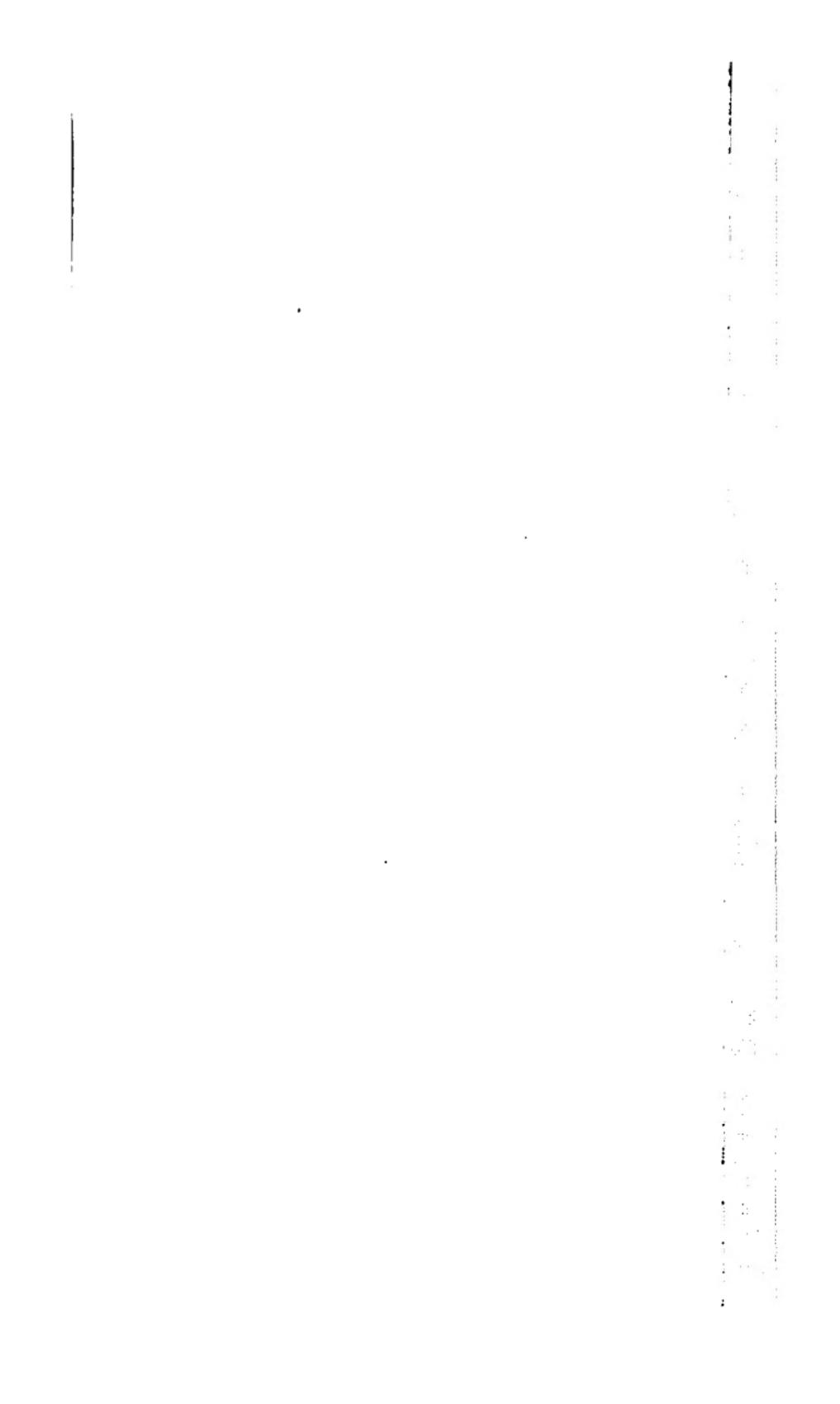


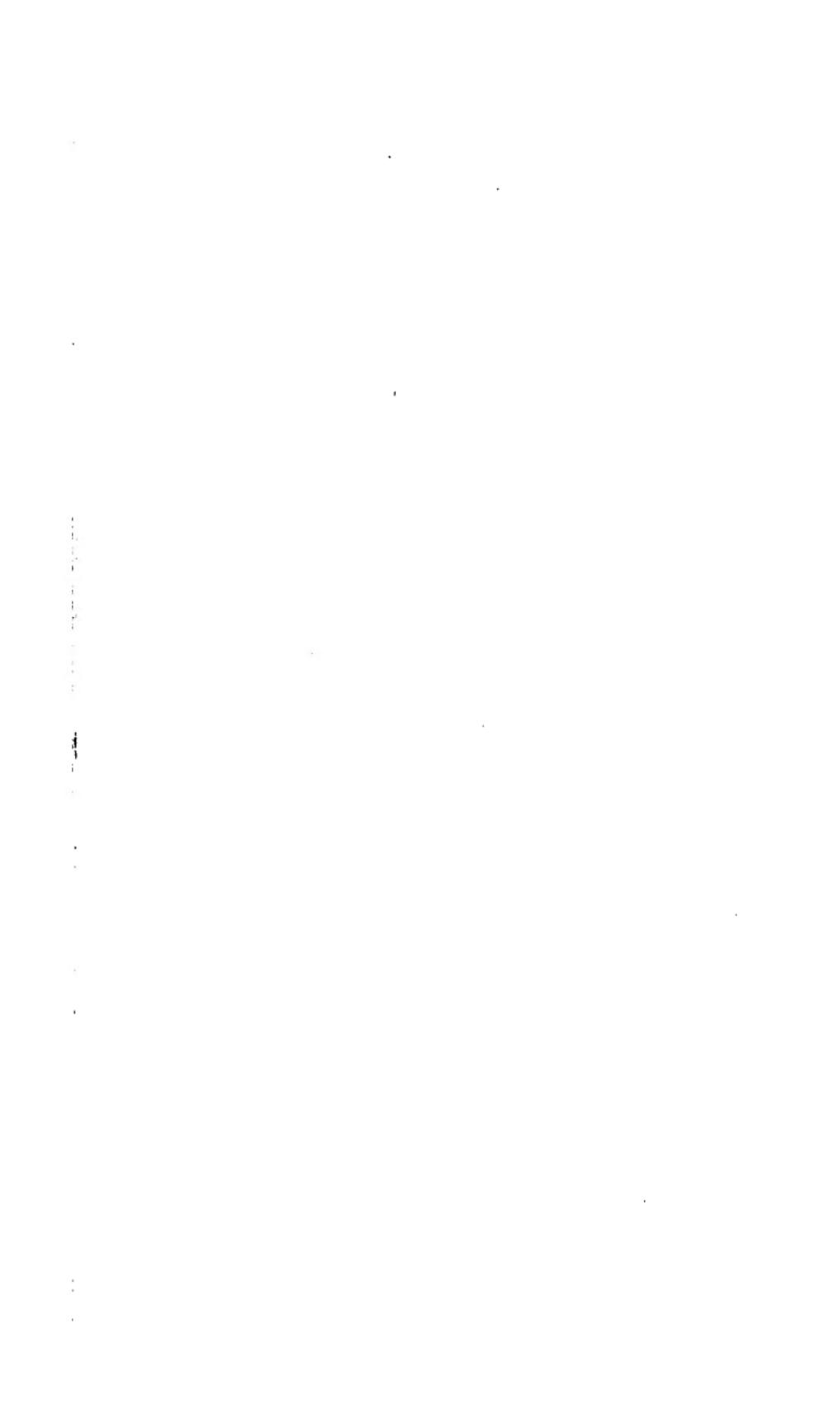
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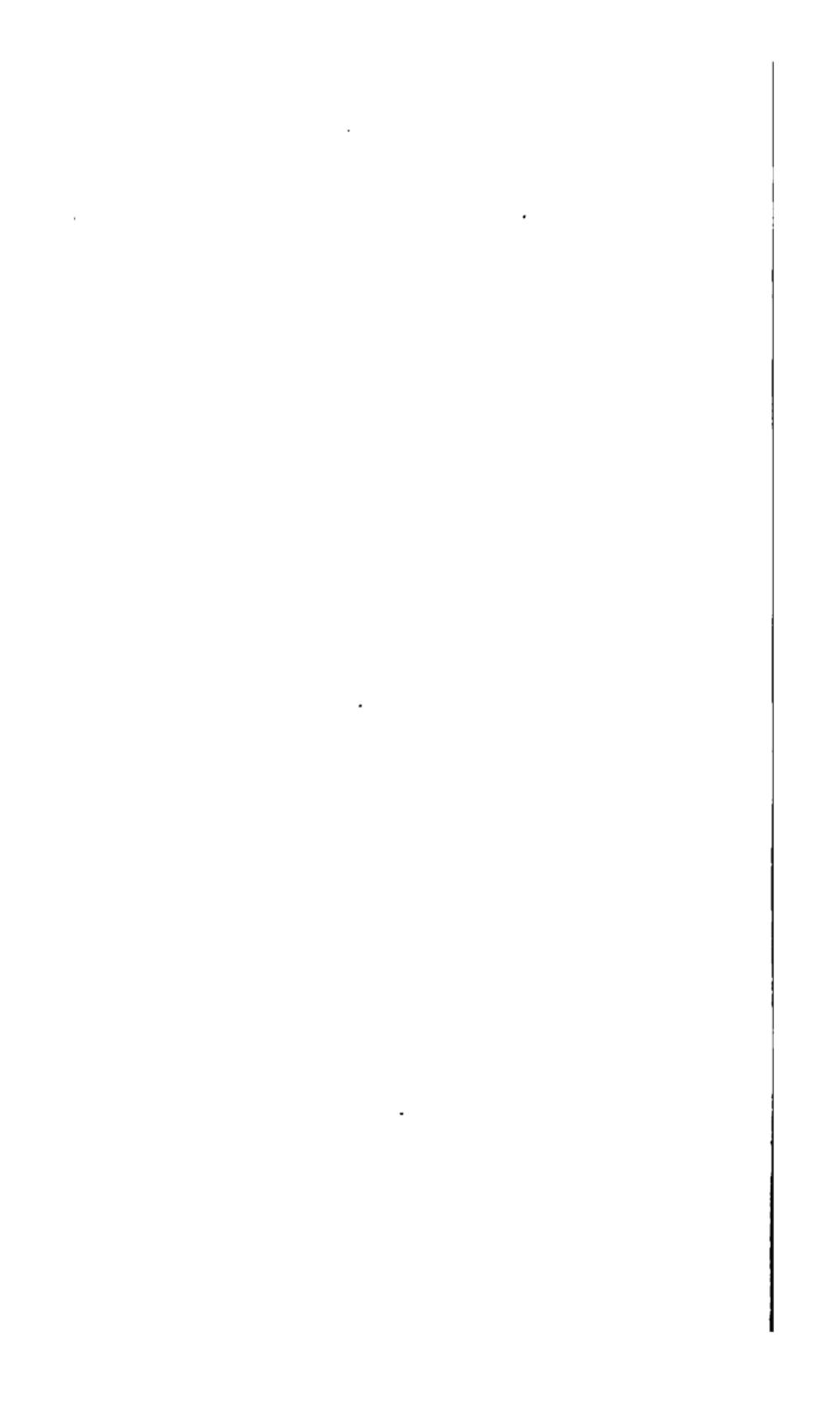
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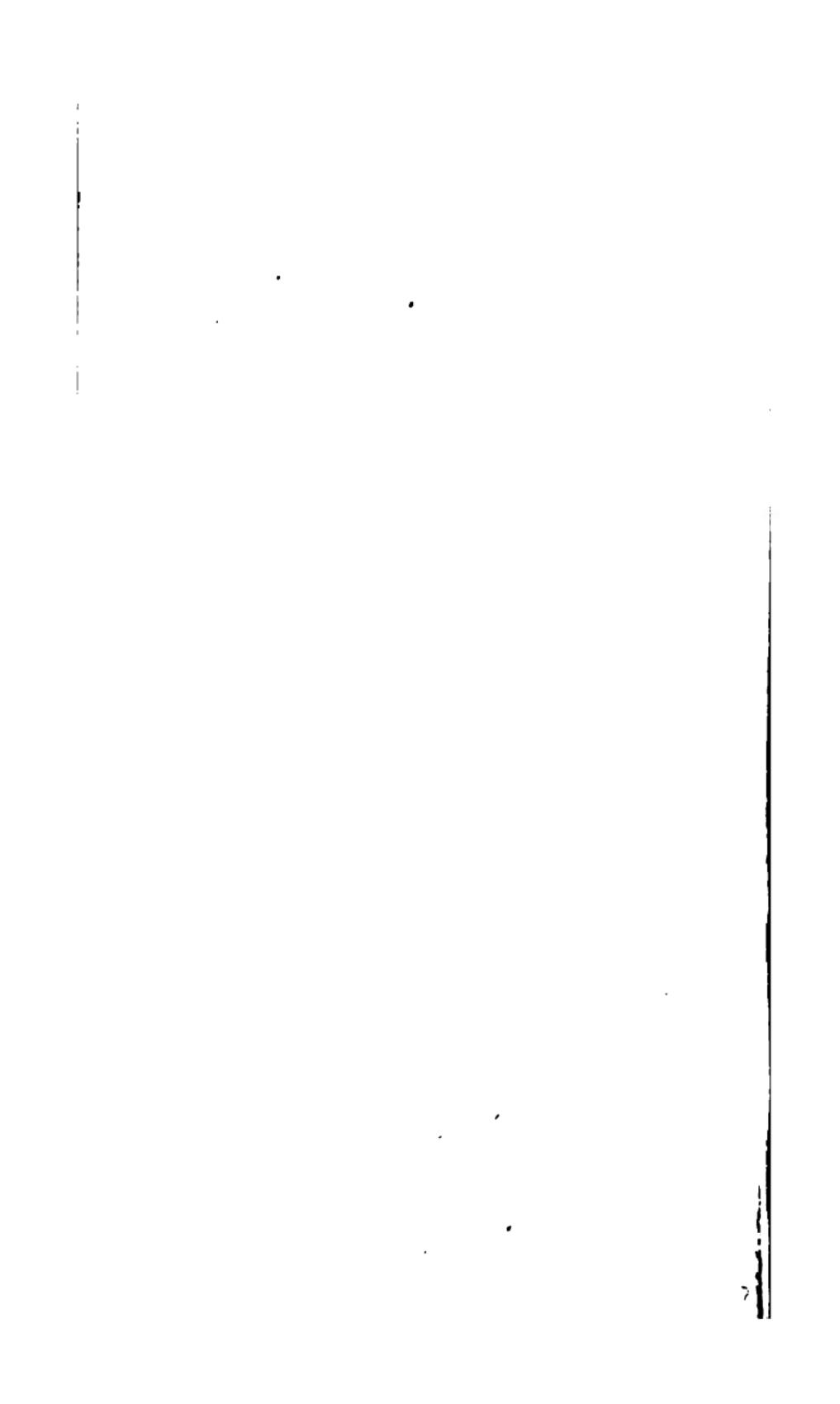




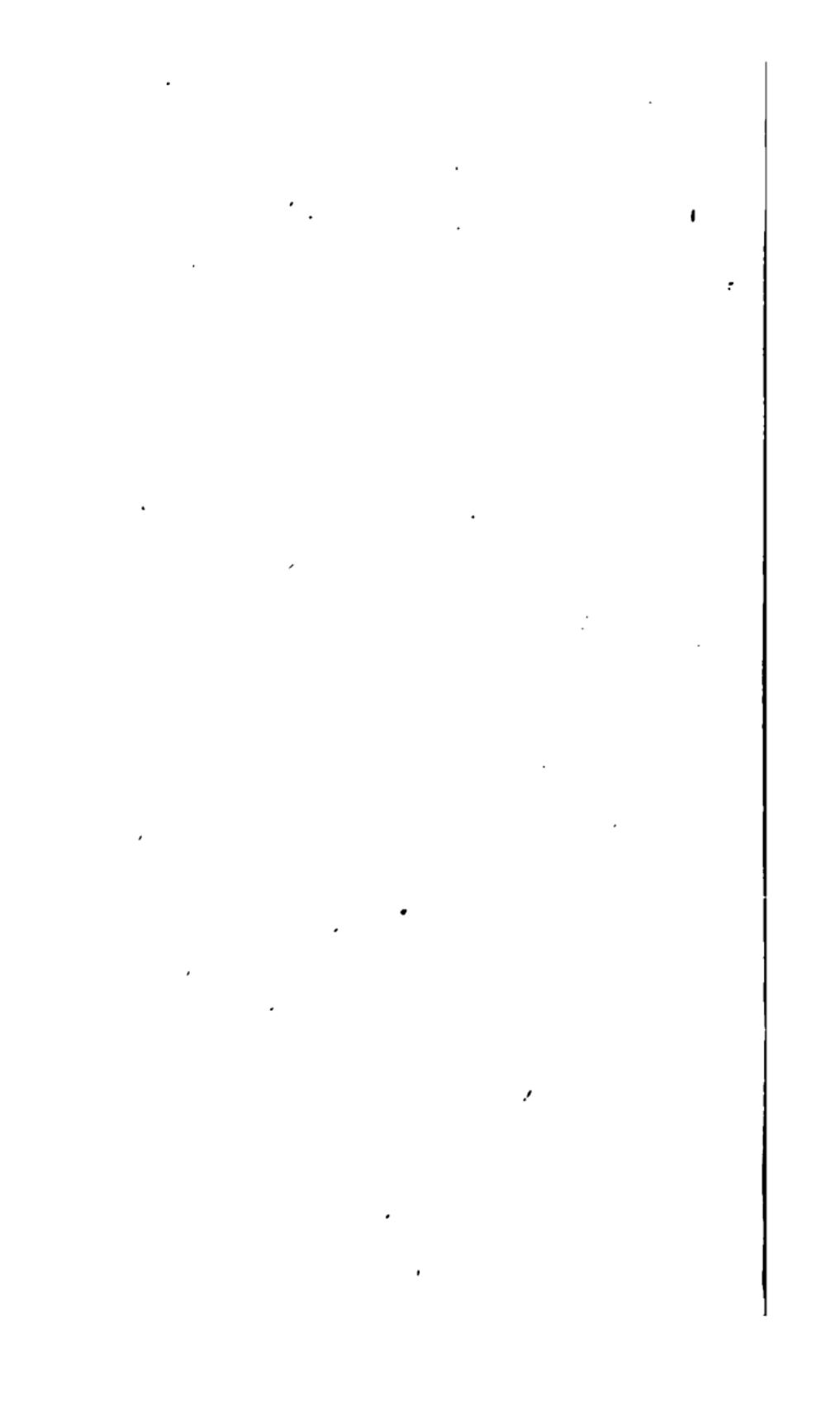




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10th Yichborne
M E M O I R S

OF THE

8th 75

COUNT OF COMMINGE.

From the F R E N C H

O F

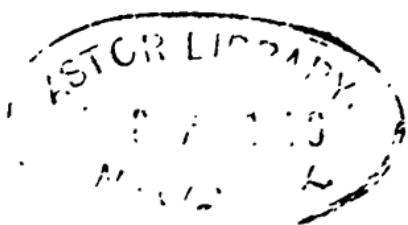
Fr. auys Istamus Marie de Vincentard
M O N S I E U R _A D' A R N A U D.

Qui pungit cor, profert sensum.

Ecclesiast. C. 22. V. 19.

L O N D O N :

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SHOW THEM
THEIR
MAGAZINE

A
S K E T C H
O F T H E
A B B E Y O F L A T R A P P E.

THE Abbey of la Trappe is situated in an extensive vale on the borders of Perche and Normandy, which seems designed by nature the retreat of penitence ; it being environed with woods, lakes, and mountains, which render it almost inaccessible.

In this solitude silence ever reigns : language can but faintly paint the melancholy scene ; a scene teeming with the most noble traits for the gloomy imagination of a painter or a poet.

A 2

The

The venerable groves which cast the cypress gloom, the winds whistling through the foliage which superstition construes inauspicious, the dying murmurs of the waters which gurgle over the pebbles, announce the confines of *la Trappe*.

It was founded by Rotrou, count du Perche, in the year 1140, to accomplish a vow made in the perils of shipwreck ; and it assumed the name of *la Trappe*, from the *stairs* which lead down to it.

Perpetual silence is the grand rule imposed on the recluse of this convent. It is the very essence of the institution ; and it was deemed a matter
of

of such high import in the founder's eye, that he intimated to those pious anchorites, that breaking silence would be to them a crime of not less heinous die than blasphemy itself. The language of the convent therefore consists rather in signs than words : and if necessity provokes one of the order at any time to violate this rigid prohibition, he must speak in a whisper with all possible conciseness.—

Society has no sweets for these holy men ; they being debarred not only the pleasures arising from rational conversation, but are absolutely secluded from communicating their thoughts in writing.

Their

Their diet is of the coarsest viands, and distributed with a sparing hand.

A plank covered with straw, is all the luxury of their dormitory.

Few hours are allowed for refreshment ; they being summoned to matins at two in the morning, which continue till the day calls them to discharge the menial services of the convent ; in which the aged and the infirm are indiscriminately employed.

Medicine is unknown within these walls ; the sick are strangers to every indulgence ; they rise up early, and late take rest. They must spend the day in prayer and in labour proportionate

tionate to their strength : they hear not the soothing voice of consolation, they feel not the alleviating hand of friendship, but must drink the cup of bitterness in all its horrors. They persevere in silence, abstinence, and mortification, till the hour of death approaches ; then they are supported to the chapel, receive the extreme unction, and are stretched on a plank strewed with ashes : in this comfortless situation they wait the moment of departure with tranquillity, with cheerfulness, with joy ; and exhibit prodigies of heroism known only to these christian philosophers. ——

IT was thought necessary, for the better understanding the following history, to give the above outlines of the institution and situation of la Trappe; and for the gratification of those minds which are dissatisfied with fictitious scenes of misery, to premise that the most striking incidents in the subsequent Memoirs, have been unhappily realized.

MEMOIRS OF THE COUNT OF COMMINGE.

MY sole motive for writing these memoirs is to recal the minutest circumstances of my misfortunes, and engrave them, if possible, more deeply on my memory.

I am descended from the house of Comminge, one of the most illustrious families in the kingdom. My great-

B grand-

grand-father, who had two children, made the youngest his heir in prejudice to his brother, and ordered him to assume the name and title of Marquis of Lussan. The partiality of the parent abated not the affection of the children, who were equally desirous, that their sons should be educated together, that the force of blood might be more closely united in the tender bands of friendship; but their wishes were ineffectual, and their utmost endeavours proved abortive; for the children imbibed an enmity in their cradles, which terminated only with their lives.

My

My father, who was greatly inferior in abilities to the young Marquis, conceived an antipathy to him, which time improved into the most inveterate hatred. They had perpetual quarrels, and as my father was ever the aggressor, he alone was punished. At length he complained to the steward of our family, who told him he could furnish him with the means to humble the pride of the Marquis : for, added he, the Marquis's estate is entailed on you, and your grand-father had no power to dispose of it ; after your father's decease therefore it will not be difficult to recover your right.

This conversation estranged my father entirely from his cousin; and their mutual animosities were carried to such excess, that a separation was the unavoidable consequence. They saw not each other for many years, during which period they both were married; the Marquis of Lussan had a daughter, an only child; my father had none but me.

As soon as the death of my grandfather had put him in possession of his estate, my father practised the steward's advice. He searched after proofs to confirm his title, he rejected every proposal of accommodation, and entered

tered a process against the Marquis, which in the end could not fail stripping him of his whole estate. An unfortunate rencontre in hunting rendered them irreconcilable ; my father, ever haughty and malicious, insulted the Marquis on the condition to which he should reduce him, in terms the most opprobrious : the Marquis, tho' naturally of an easy temper, could not forbear reply ; this altercation brought on a duel, which terminated in favour of the Marquis, who disarmed my father and bid him beg his life. Even life, says he, would be odious, if to you I owed it. To me you shall owe it, replied the Marquis,

and tossing him his sword, he left him.

This generous act affected not my father; his prejudices on the contrary were increased by the double victory his enemy had gained over him; and he prosecuted with implacable assiduity, the suit he had commenced against him.

Things were thus circumstanced when I returned from my travels. I had been in the country but few days, when the Abbot of Rouillon (a relation of my mother's) acquainted us, that the titles of the estate, on which depended

depended the success of the law-suit, were lodged in the archives of his abbey, where the title-deeds of our own family had been concealed during the confusion of the civil wars. This information my father was most carefully to conceal, and to search in person for the papers, or send one in whom he could repose the most implicit confidence. As my father was in an ill state of health, he charged me with the commission, having previously exaggerated the importance of it. The success of your researches, says he, will tend more to your emolument than mine, since on recovering the estate, I will immediately vest

it in you : but exclusive of your own interest, I flatter myself you so sensibly feel the wrongs of your father, that you will most cordially assist him in revenging the injuries he has received.

I had no reason to refuse my father's request, therefore assured him of my obedience ; and having received all necessary instructions, it was thought expedient for me to assume the name and title of Marquis of Longville, the better to escape suspicion in the abbey, where the Marchioness of Lussan had many relations. An old domestic of my father's, and my own valet de chambre

chambre were my sole attendants: I hastened to the abbey, where I found the title deeds, which incontestably confirmed the entail, and acquainted my father with it, begging permission at the same time to spend some days at the Wells which were in the neighbourhood. The success of my researches bribed my father to consent, and I set out to the Wells immediately, retaining my feigned name, as it would have been requisite to have appeared with a grander retinue to support the dignity of the House of Comminge.

The

The day after my arrival I was introduced to the company, and as in those places of public resort the stiffness of ceremonial gives way to freedom of behaviour, I was immediately admitted into all the parties of pleasure.

I dined with the Marquis of Valette, who gave an elegant entertainment to the ladies, most of whom I had seen before at the Wells, and had paid them some general compliments, agreeable to the gallantry of the age. To these ladies I was talking indiscriminately, when a matron of most noble presence entered the room, attended

tended by her daughter, who was blessed with the most perfect symmetry of features, and elegance of person ; her unassuming modesty heightened the glow of youth, and added grace to every charm. I loved instantaneously, and the first moment decided my fate. My gaiety vanished, and my whole attention was solely fixed on her. She perceived my anxiety with a blush. A walk was proposed, and I had the happiness to give my hand to the most lovely of her sex. We were at such distance from the company, that I had a fair opportunity of disclosing the sentiments of my heart ; but I, who ha

my eyes riveted on her before without ceasing, could not now, when unobserved, dare raise them from the earth. In my gallantry with the fair, my heart had hitherto been a stranger to the dictates of my tongue; but now I could not conceal from myself the tender emotions with which I was moved.

We rejoined the company without having opened my lips; the ladies retired to their respective houses, and I to my lodgings, the better to enjoy my anxiety, which was blended with a gleam of joy, a joy that ever accompanies the commencement of love.

My

My passion had rendered me so timid that I dared not even enquire the name of my beloved, as if my curiosity would have betrayed the sentiments of my soul. But what was my situation, when I heard the lady was daughter to the Marquis of Lussan !

Every thing I had to apprehend from the enmity of our families flashed upon my memory. But of all the melancholy reflections, which presented themselves to view, the dread of Adelaid's being inspired with aversion to every one of our family, was by far the most intolerable. I could not but applaud myself for having assumed

assumed a feigned name, and flattered myself, that under this disguise I should make her conscious of my love without prepossessing her against me ; and that when at length I should discover the deceit, I should excite at least her pity.

I was determined more studiously to conceal my name, and to exert every talent which might render me agreeable. I haunted Adelaid as her shadow ; my sole wish was to have an opportunity of speaking to her alone, which when it offered, I dared not take : the fear of losing a thousand little liberties, and much more

the

the apprehension of her displeasure,
frightened me into silence.

In this state of inquietude I had lived for some time ; at length a fine evening enticed the company to walk, when Adelaid accidentally dropped her bracelet, in which was set her picture. The Chevalier de St. Odon very officiously picked it up ; and having attentively surveyed it, with great composure deposited it in his pocket. She begged him to return it with much good humour, but on his refusal spoke with some warmth.

The

The Chevalier was a man of address, but his success with the fair had made him vain and coxcomical. Adelaid's peremptory demand nothing disconcerted him ; he asked her with a smile, whether she would deprive him of that for which he was indebted to chance alone.

I flatter myself, added he, in a lower tone of voice, that when you are acquainted with my sentiments, you will have no objection to my keeping what fortune has thus graciously thrown in my way, and without waiting for an answer, instantly withdrew.

I was at some small distance, during this fracas, with the Marchioness of Valette; but when I perceived that the voice of Adelaid was more than usually animated, I drew near, but failed not in those attentions which respect requires. She related the circumstance to her mother with some emotion. The Marchioness was not less angry than her daughter. I spoke not a word, but continued my walk with the ladies, and having waited on them home, I then immediately went in search of the Chevalier. I found him at home, told him the purport of my visit, and that I should wait for him at a place appointed. He

C accepted

accepted my invitation, and met me accordingly. I am persuaded, said I, immediately accosting him, that the affair which happened on the walks was a mere pleasantry, but I am sure you are too gallant a man to keep a lady's picture without her permission. I know not, replies he, what interest you may have in the affair, but this I know, that I never permit advice to be thus impertinently intruded on me. I trust, said I, laying my hand upon my sword, that this will enforce my advice, and oblige you to follow it.

The Chevalier was brave, and drew immediately; we fought for some time

time with equal address; but he was not animated with love like mine; my passion threw me off my guard, and laid me open to two slight wounds; in return I made a dangerous but successful thrust, which obliged him to beg his life and return the picture. Having raised him up and conducted him to a house adjacent, I retired to my lodgings and dressed my wounds. Then I examined the dear picture, and imprinted on it a thousand kisses. In painting I was an adept, and had now an opportunity of exerting my skill. What cannot love perform! I copied the picture the same night, and so happily succeeded, that I myself

could scarce distinguish the copy from the original. This gave me the idea of substituting the one for the other. In keeping the original I found a lover's advantage, that then even without her knowledge, she would oblige me by honouring my work with her notice ; these things are no trifles in the eye of a lover, as my heart full well can testify.—After having disposed the bracelet in its former shape that my theft might escape detection, I carried it to Adelaid. The Marchioness of Lusian said a thousand obliging things on the occasion ; Adelaid indeed spake but little ; she appeared embarrassed ; but a gleam of joy in being obliged

to me, seemed to shine through her confusion, which gave me the most heart-felt satisfaction.

I have in my life experienced some few of those delicious moments, and if my misfortunes had not been uncommonly great, I should not have thought them too dearly purchased.

This little adventure was productive of the most favourable consequences; it gained me such intimacy in the family, that I had frequent opportunities of seeing Adelaid; and although I never had disclosed my sentiments, was well assured, they had

not escaped her notice: and I had some reason to imagine that I was not wholly disagreeable to her. Hearts susceptible as ours are not long strangers to each other, but most sensibly express the delicate feelings of the soul.

Two months had glided on in this amusive manner, when a letter from my father ordered me to return. This was like a thunder-bolt too forcible to be withstood. I had been so wholly wrapped up in the pleasing thoughts of seeing and loving Adelaid, that the idea of our being separated was perfectly new; My grief on the occasion,

from, my reflections on the continuation of the law-suit unhappily subsisting between our families, with every thing that was odious, presented themselves to my view ; I passed the night in misery inexpressible, and after projecting a thousand schemes which died away in embryo, it on a sudden struck me to destroy the papers relative to the estate, which confirmed our title to the domains of the house of Luffian. I was astonished that the scheme had not before engaged my attention, since it must infallibly prevent the consequences of that law-suit, which so much I feared. I even reproached myself for having kept so

long, what my tenderness ought much sooner to have destroyed. The injury I was doing my father seemed of little consequence; as I could transfer to him an estate, which a relation had bequeathed me, far superior to that I was going to deprive him of.

Little is requisite to convince a man in love, I thought I had a right to dispose of those papers; I searched the casket which contained them, and never knew a happier moment, than that which gave them to the flames. The idea of obliging my beloved ravished my very soul. If she loves me, said I, she shall know the sacrifice I have

I have made ; but if I cannot touch her heart, let her ever remain in ignorance. How shall I endure her regret at being obliged to me ? That Adelaid may love me, from my heart I pray, but I wish not to burden her with obligations. Not her gratitude, but her affection is the sole object of my desires.

I cannot but confess, that the consciousness of what I had done, imboldened me to speak with greater freedom ; and as the moment of my departure was at hand, I seized the first favourable opportunity.

Beautiful

Beautiful Adelaid, said I, the moment approaches, which must separate me from you ; will you deign sometimes to think of the man, whose future happiness depends alone on you ? My grief was too big for utterance, I could speak no more. She answered me not ; but seemed confused and melancholy. Have you, said I, heard me with a favourable ear ? Answer me, for heaven's sake answer me, though but a word ! what would you that I should say ? I ought not to understand you, I ought not to reply. ——

She had scarce pronounced these words, when she abruptly left me ; and though I watched every opportunity,

tunity, I could not speak to her the remainder of the day. She studiously avoided me ; her air was much confused, and I was apprehensive, that by my assurance, I had forfeited her esteem. I attended on her with reverential silence, and should have continued this behaviour so conformable to my respect, and agreeable to the delicacy of my sentiments, had not the necessity I was under to leave her, urged me to break silence. I wished before my departure to acquaint her with my real name ; a confession which gave me more concern than even the declaration of my love. O my Adelaid, why do you so carefully avoid me !

me! what then will you do, when you know all my crimes, or rather my misfortunes? Under a fictitious name I have much abused your confidence; I am not whom you think.— I am—the Count of Comminge.— What, interrupted Adelaid, are you our mortal foe? It is you, it is your father who pursue with unremitting hate our family to ruin.— Brand me not with a name so odious; I am your lover ready to sacrifice my fortune and my life in your service. My father shall not do you evil; my love assures you of it.

Why

Why have you thus deceived me, says she, why dealt thus ungenerously with me ? Had you not deceived me, I should not have been thus unhappy ; had you discovered your real name, it would have taught me to avoid you.

Repent not, replied I, of that goodness, you have deigned to shew me.

Leave me, says she, leave me, the more I see, the more I hear, renders to a greater degree inevitable the miseries I cannot but apprehend.

The tenderness of these words, which gave me reason to hope, filled my

my soul with joy ineffable. I flattered myself that my father would consent to my request ; I was so full of the idea, that I thought every one must think and feel as I did. I even mentioned my hopes to Adelaid as certain of success. I know not, says she, why my heart refuses these amusing hopes ; misery stares me in the face ; yet I am happy in feeling, what I feel for you. I have without reserve disclosed my sentiments ; sentiments I am willing you should know ; but at the same time remember, that I shall know when requisite to sacrifice them to my duty.

I had previous to my departure frequent conversations with Adelaid, and had every day new reasons to congratulate myself on my good fortune. The pleasure of loving, and the consciousness of being loved, filled all my soul with joy. Jealousy disturbed not the harmony of our discourse; distrust interrupted not our future schemes of happiness. We were convinced of each other's affections, and this certainty so far from diminishing our vivacity, heightened the pleasure of mutual confidence. Adelaid's only quietude arose from her apprehensions of my father. I shall die with grief, says she, if I should bring you into disgrace

disgrace with your family ; I hope you love me, but I hope you will be happy. At length the dreadful moment came ; I left her full of the most tender and lively passion ; and I buoyed up myself with the hopes of rendering my father favourable to my love.

Alas ! he already was informed of every circumstance which had passed. The servant he had sent with me, was ordered to be a spy on my conduct ; he therefore had acquainted my father with my love and with my duel : and had painted the Marchioness of Lussan and her daughter as artful designing

wo-

women, who knew me to be the Count of Comminge, and had enticed me into their snares. My father, naturally passionate, was worked up by this information to a paroxysm of fury ; he treated me on my return with the most savage inhumanity, and reproached me with my attachment to Adelaid as with a crime of the blackest enormity.

Base wretch, says he, dare you love my enemies ; without any regard to what you owe either yourself, or me, you have entered into engagements with a family which my heart abhors. I know not to what lengths your meanness may have carried you.

D

Yes,

Yes, my father, said I, I am blameable, but I am unavoidably so. I cannot withstand my fate ; and while I on my knees implore your pardon, I feel that no power on earth can detach me from my love. Have pity on me, I dare repeat, have pity on me ! Finish this variance, which has imbibed the sunshine of your days, and suffer yourself to be reconciled to the house of Lussan. Our mutual love the moment we saw each other seems to be the interposition of heaven to effect a reconciliation. You are the father of none but me ! wish you to load me with misery, aggravated with the reflection of having received the

cup

cup of bitterness from the hand of him who gave me life? Have compassion on a son who has involuntarily offended!

My father regarded me while I spake with an eye of indignation; I have heard you, says he, with a composure which astonishes me, and which I thought myself incapable of; the only favour you can expect from me is this alternative; either renounce your folly, or the title of my son; be speedy in your resolves, and instantly deliver up those papers entrusted to your care, a confidence you little merited.

Had my father relented, his demand would have perplexed me much ; but his cruelty gave me courage. The papers, replied I, are no longer in my custody, they are committed to the flames ; let my estate indemnify your loss. Scarce had I spoken, when my father, with all the fury of a maniac, drew his sword, and as I made not the least effort of resistance, he would have inevitably killed me, had not my mother that instant entered the apartment, and threw herself between us in the moment the father was going to imbrue his hands in the blood of an only child. Know you not your own son, cried she ? then turning to me,

me, ordered me to attend her in her dressing room.—I waited a considerable time before my mother appeared; at length she came, not armed with rage, nor disguised by passion; she looked, she spake the tender parent, who entered into all my pains. She begged me with tears to pity the condition I had reduced her to.

Alas my son can a mistress whom you have so lately known blot all duty from your memory?—May not a parent's tears prevail? If on me your happiness depended, my life should be a willing sacrifice. But you my son have a father who will be obeyed; he

is now ready to enter into the most violent measures. If you wish not to load me with misery insupportable, conquer a passion productive of nothing but unhappiness.—

I knew not what to reply; I loved my mother with all the tenderness of filial affection, but my passion for Adelaid was too violent to be removed. I should prefer death, said I, to the disobliging of you; and die I shall, if you have not pity on me. To what would you advise me? I can give up life with greater ease than Adelaid. Dare I break the vows, the protestations I have made? after receiving proofs of

her

her affection, shall I forsake her ? No
my mother, you cannot wish your
son to be a villain.—

I then related the whole progress of
my love; I am certain, said I, you
would approve of my choice, for she
has your sweetness of disposition, she
has your openness of heart; can you
then wish me to cease loving such ami-
ableness ? But, says my mother, what
do you purpose to do ? Your father
insists on your immediately marrying,
and you are to be sent into the country
till the day arrives. It is therefore ab-
solutely necessary that you appear de-
termined to obey him. You are to

D 4 be

be sent into the country to-morrow, attended by a person in whom he can confide.

Absence may work greater miracles than you imagine ; time may efface the traces of Adelaid's perfections, and you may be again yourself. But at all adventures irritate not your father by disobedience ; delay the time, if possible ; I on my part will leave nothing undone that may give you satisfaction. Your father's disposition has ever been too violent, but now his vengeance is lawful, to what extremes will it not provoke him ? You are highly culpable in destroying those

those papers ; and he is persuaded that Adelaid inveigled you to make her that sacrifice by the order of her mother.

Alas said I, is it possible he can think so uncharitably of the Marchioness of Luffan ! So far from it, that Adelaid knows not what I have done ; and I am confident she would have employed all her power over me to have prevented it.

I then concerted a plan of correspondence, and begged she would visit Adelaid on her arrival at Bourdeaux. She assured me she would, on condition

tion that I would implicitly submit to my father, if Adelaid's affection should fall short of my expectations. The greatest part of the night passed away in conversing with my mother, when the morning dawned, my conductor informed me I must mount my horse.

The place of my exile was situated in the mountains, some leagues distant from the Wells ; I went therefore part of the same road which I had so lately travelled. As we arrived early the second day of our journey at a village where we were to spend the night, I took a walk on the high-road by way of amusement till supper ; I had

had gone but a small distance, before I observed a carriage, which through the awkwardness of the driver was overturned some paces from me. Not only humanity, but the unusual fluttering of my heart told me the part I was to act on the occasion. I fled to the chariot; two servants who had quitted their horses assisted me in relieving the sufferers, whom I found on enquiry to be Adelaid and her mother. It was them indeed! Adelaid had greatly bruised her foot, but the pleasure of seeing me made her forget her pains. She was too lame to walk; I gently raised her up; I clasped her in my arms; hers folded round

round my neck, her hand gently pressed upon my lips. Not all my miseries, nor so many years of sorrow can efface from my memory that rapturous moment which gave my Adelaid to my arms. I was in an extacy of joy that near deprived me of sensation : Adelaid could not but perceive it ; her modesty took the alarm, and she endeavoured to disengage herself from my embrace. Alas ! little did she know the excess of my love ; I was too full of my raptures, to think of aught beside.

Let me endeavour to walk, says she, in a low and timid voice ; have you

you then, replied I, the cruelty to envy me the only happiness perhaps I shall ever taste? My words were accompanied with a look of inexpressible tenderness. She continued silent; and one false step intentionally made, fixed her in her former situation.

The inn was so near, that in a few moments I was deprived of my precious charge. I carried her to an apartment, while the servants took care of her mother, who was much more dangerously hurt: as they were busy in attending on the Marchioness, it gave me an opportunity of relating part

part of the conversation between my father and me.

I suppressed the article of having burnt the title deeds, which she had not the least suspicion of ; her knowledge of which would have concerned me much. I dared not paint my father in his proper colours ; for Adelaid was so strictly virtuous, that she would have lent a deaf ear to my vows, had she not flattered herself, that our families would at length consent to our union.

I confirmed her hopes by assuring her of my mother's tenderness for me, and.

and favourable opinion of her. Adelaid then desired that I would speak to the Marchioness : " She knows
" your sentiments for me, and is no
" stranger to the situation of my heart.
" I thought her authority necessary to
" assist me in conquering my incli-
" nations, if requisite ; or to let me
" give way to them without control.
" I am confident she will leave no ex-
" pedient untried that may effect an
" accommodation."

The joy which these hopes gave Adelaid, made my heart more livelily susceptible of its misery. " Tell me
" replied I, (pressing her hand with
" all

“ all the warmth of virtuous love) if
“ our fathers should prove inexorable,
“ will you then have pity on me?
“ My utmost endeavours, says she,
“ shall be exerted to make my incli-
“ nations conformable to my duty;
“ but I feel, that I shall be most
“ miserable, if duty should oblige
“ me to renounce you.”

The Marchioness of Lussan's at-
tendants coming in, interrupted our
conversation. I immediately paid my
respects to the old lady, who received
me with great cordiality, and pro-
mised to leave nothing undone, which
could

could contribute to the reconciliation of our families.

On this assurance I withdrew, and searched after my conductor who waited for me in my chamber. As he had not had the curiosity to enquire the strangers names, I had an opportunity of seeing Adelaid once again before my departure. I the next morning entered her chamber in a situation which beggars all description; the idea of taking leave perhaps for ever chilled my blood with horror. I approached her mother, my voice faltered, I could not speak! but grief was a powerful advocate, and so suc-

E cessfully

cessfully pleaded my cause, that I was honoured with more particular marks of esteem than the preceding evening. Adelaid was retired to the other end of the room ; it was with difficulty I could support myself ; I at length drew near and attempted to speak, but could only say, my dearest Adelaid, must I leave you ? my tears spoke the rest —I have, says she, (the sympathizing tear stealing down her cheek) already shewed you the sensibility of my heart ; I repent not of it. The purity of my thoughts authorizes my freedom, and you merit my utmost good opinion. What will be our fate I know not. My parents must decide mine.—

mine.—Why, replied I, should we submit to the tyranny of our parents? Let us treat them as they deserve? Let us fly to the extremest corner of the earth, and enjoy in retirement the sweets of mutual love.

How dare you, answered Adelaid, affront me with such a proposal? Would you have me repent of my choice, would you that I should recal my favourable opinion of you? I have already confessed that my tenderness may render me miserable, but depend on it it shall never make me criminal. Adieu, added she, (offering me her hand) and remember that by

our constancy and our virtue we must engage the smiles of fortune ; but however we may be disposed of, let us resolve to do nothing which may make us blush for each other.

I kissed her hand as she spake ; I bathed it with my tears : I attempted to speak, but my tongue refused its office. My heart was so full, that I quitted her apartment without making any reply.

I instantly mounted my horse, and rode the whole day without sustenance, and without ceasing to weep. At length my tears abated, and I began to

to taste the tranquillity which results from a consciousness of being tenderly beloved.—

The remainder of our journey passed as the beginning, in an uninterrupted silence.—We arrived on the third day at a castle built at the bottom of the Pyrenees, which was destined for my retreat.—Groves of cypress and barren rocks were all my view, and I heard nothing but the croaking of the ravens and the thunder of the cataracts which fell from the mountains.—

This situation, all savage as it was, gave me much satisfaction. For the gloominess of the prospect fed the melancholy of my mind. I spent whole days in the woods, writing the effusions of my love; this was my only pleasure, this was my sole employ.

I heard sometimes from my mother, and in one letter she gave me a gleam of hope, by telling me that all our relations were labouring at an accommodation, and that she had reason to think their endeavours would not be ineffectual. For the ensuing six weeks I had no letter from my mother; good God!

God ! how tedious were those days to me. I walked constantly upon the road the messenger must come, and returned as constantly disappointed. At length I saw at some distance a man whose business I doubted not was with me. My former impatience vanished, and gave way to fear. I dared not advance to meet him, my feet were riveted to the ground. The doubts the anxiety which appeared before so insupportable, seemed at that instant to be a blessing I was soon to be deprived of.

I was not deceived.—The letters brought me by this messenger, inform-

ed me that my father would not listen to any terms ; and to add to the fulness of my misery, I moreover learned that he finally had fixed my marriage with a daughter of the Count of Foix ; that the nuptials were to be celebrated at the place of my confinement, and that he would be with me in a few days to prepare for the solemnity. I did not hesitate one moment on the part I was to act ; I expected my father's arrival with composure ; and it was some mitigation to my pains to be enabled to make Adelaid this sacrifice. I was well assured of her fidelity ; I loved too much to doubt it. Love like mine was a stranger to suspicion.—

My mother likewise who had such cogent reasons to detach me from Adelaid, had never even hinted in her letters the least suspicion of her inconstancy.—

Adelaid's fidelity contributed to the liveliness of my passion, and I was more enabled to meet my father's severity, as it gave me an opportunity of shewing my affection. The three days previous to my father's arrival, I passed in settling my plan of behaviour, which would give Adelaid fresh instances of my constancy. This idea in spite of my deplorable situation, filled

filled my heart with a sensation bordering on joy.——

The interview between my father and me was on my part very cool, but respectful; on his, stern and haughty.

I have given you time, says he, to repent of your follies, and now am come to give you an opportunity to atone for them. Let your obedience be your reply to this mark of my goodness, and prepare to receive as your wife the lady I have destined for you. The marriage shall be here; your mother will arrive to-morrow with

with the Count of Foix and his daughter. I am extremely sorry, Sir, (said I) that it is not in my power to oblige you. I have too much honour to give my hand, where my heart will ever be a stranger. I beg your permission therefore to leave this place; since Mademoiselle de Foix, all amiable as she may be, will not be able to shake my resolution: and the ill compliment I must pay her, will be felt more sensibly in refusing her hand, after I shall be acquainted with her person; let me intreat you therefore to detain me no longer in this place.

No,

No, replies my father, with fury
flashing from his eye, you shall not
go, neither shall you more behold the
sun; for I will instantly confine you
in a dungeon, destined for the re-
ception of such as you.—I swear
no power on earth shall ever set
you at liberty, unless you return
to your duty. I will punish you by
every method my vengeance can sug-
gest; I will disinherit you, I will strip
you of your fortune, and give it to
Mademoiselle de Foix, that I may
keep my word with her as much as in
my power. His threat was instantly
executed, and I was conducted to
the

the bottom of a tower, which admitted only a glimmering light through a small iron grate in the wall. He ordered me to be most narrowly watched, to be fed but twice in the day, and to be secluded from all intercourse with my friends or relations.

In this state did I pass some days not wholly devoid of satisfaction. The sacrifice I had made Adelaid so entirely engrossed my attention, that I paid no regard to the inconveniences of a prison. But when this reflection became less lively on my imagination, I gave way to all the agonies of grief, I tortured myself with apprehensions that

that Adelaid might be forced into new engagements. I painted her as surrounded with my rivals assiduous in their devoirs, while I was immured in a dungeon, the companion of affliction. Recollection checked such rebel thoughts, and my heart smote me for harbouring suspicions of that ungenerous nature.

My mother contrived to convey a letter to me, in which she exhorted me to obey my father, whose resentment grew every day more violent. She added, that she had suffered greatly on my account, and that her assiduity in attempting a reconciliation
had

had made my father suspect her correspondence.

My mother's uneasiness gave me fresh concern, but I thought my own sufferings would in some measure excuse my behaviour. As I was thus meditating on the severity of my fate, I was interrupted in my reverie, by a noise at the window, and immediately a letter dropped into the room. I broke it open with anxiety bordering on distraction, I was motionless with apprehension; but what became of me after I had read it? These were the contents. —

“ I am

“ I am indebted to the Count of
“ Comminge for the knowledge of
“ my obligations to you, which his
“ anger provoked him to discover,
“ and which your generosity would
“ never have revealed. I am like-
“ wise but too well acquainted with
“ the horrors of your situation, from
“ which you cannot be relieved, but
“ by means which probably may
“ heighten your misery. Your ge-
“ nerosity requires the most grateful
“ return; gratitude enables me to ex-
“ ecute, what your sufferings most
“ justly demand. Your father insists,
“ that the price of your liberty shall
“ be my immediate marriage, as that
“ will

“ will effectually prevent the union
“ so odious to his thoughts. The sa-
“ crifice may perhaps cost me my
“ life, most certainly my peace of
“ mind for ever. Not misery in all
“ its variety of horrors shall aught
“ avail, I am determined! Your suf-
“ fferings, your imprisonment, are
“ ever before my eyes. In a few
“ days I shall be the wife of the Mar-
“ quis of Benavides. That which I
“ know of his character, tells me
“ what I am to undergo. But at
“ least I owe you this mark of my
“ fidelity, that I can from my en-
“ gagement foresee nothing but mi-
“ sery. You, on the contrary, en-

“ deavour to be happy. Your ease
“ and tranquillity will be my only
“ consolation. I ought not to have
“ said so much. Was I truly ge-
“ nerous, my motive for marrying
“ should be to you unknown, that
“ you might call ingratitude, what
“ arises from excess of love. I had
“ formed such a design, but wanted
“ courage to put it in execution. In
“ my deplorable situation, I need the
“ consolation of thinking, that my
“ memory will not be odious to you.
“ Alas ! how soon must I banish all
“ thoughts of you. I must forget
“ you ; I must at least attempt it.
“ But my misery, however keen, will
“ be

“ be more sensibly aggravated, if you
“ do not most studiously avoid all
“ occasion of seeing or speaking to
“ me. Remember, that you owe me
“ this mark of your esteem; and
“ think how dear that esteem must
“ be to me, since that is the only
“ sentiment virtue will permit me to
“ demand.” —

Of this fatal epistle, I read only to these words, “ Your father insists, “ that the price of your liberty shall “ be my immediate marriage.” That dreadful sentence penetrated me with such a lively grief, that I could read no more. I threw myself on a mat-

dress, which was the whole furniture of my bed, where I laid for some hours without sensation, and probably had closed my eyes for ever, had it not been for the assistance of the servant who brought my food. He was greatly alarmed at the state he found me in, but much more so at the excess of my sorrow, when I recovered my senses. The letter, which during my swoon, I had held fast in my hand, was bathed with my tears, and I spoke so incoherently, that he was under apprehensions for my reason.—

This man, who before was dead to every sentiment of compassion, could not

not now resist the feelings of humanity. He condemned the proceedings of my father, he reproached himself for executing his orders, and with much sincerity implored my pardon. His penitence prompted me to ask his connivance at my absence for eight days only; at the expiration of which term, I gave him my honour, I would return and deliver myself into his hands. My gaoler grown compassionate by my sufferings, stimulated by his interest, and probably apprehensive of my future vengeance, was bribed to consent, on condition he might attend me.

My design, as soon as formed, I wished to execute, but no horses were in readiness, I therefore reluctantly waited for the ensuing morning. My intention was to see Adelaid, to display all the horrors of my despair, and on her persisting in her resolution, to die at her feet.—It was necessary for the execution of my purpose to arrive before her marriage; every moment therefore of delay appeared an age. I red over the letter again and again; hoping to find something, which might before have escaped my notice. I examined the date; and flattered myself, that this fatal marriage might be delayed.

“ She

" She has made this effort, said I, to
 " shew her generosity ; but undoubt-
 " edly she will seize every pretext to
 " defer it. But how can I flatter my-
 " self with such idle chimeras ? Ade-
 " laid sacrifices herself to my liberty,
 " she therefore will expedite the
 " day.—Alas ! how could she sup-
 " pose that liberty alone had any
 " charms for me ? No—I shall every-
 " where find that prison from which she
 " wishes to deliver me.—She never
 " knew my love.—She views me
 " through the false medium of other
 " men.—Yes—there is the rock on
 " which I split—I am yet more
 " miserable than my gloomy imagi-

" nation painted me ; for now I have
" lost the consolation of thinking,
" that she was conscious of the excess
" of my passion." The whole night
was passed in plaints like these. As
soon as the morning dawned, I mount-
ed my steed, and rode the whole day
a stranger to refreshment. I was to-
wards the evening unexpectedly met
by my mother, who having testified
her surprise at the unexpected meeting,
insisted on my getting into her car-
riage. I dared not enquire the occa-
sion of her journey ; I feared the worst ;
my fears were too well founded. ——

I come

I come, says she, my son, with your father's consent, to deliver you from your imprisonment. Alas, said I, Adelaid is married! My mother answered only by her silence.—My misfortunes which were now irremediable burst upon me in all their horrors. I fell into a state of insensibility, and such was the power of grief, that my mind was alike indifferent to every sensation. Neither was my body a stranger to pain. I was seized with a shivering fit while we were in the chariot: my mother, as soon as we alighted, ordered me to bed. The two following days I laid without speaking, without nourishment.—My fever increased,

creased, and the third day I was thought beyond the power of physic. My mother never left my chamber ; her tears, her intreaties, and the name of Adelaid, by which she often invoked me, at length prevailed on me to live. After five days the fury of the fever abated. My first enquiry was for Adelaid's letter, which my mother had taken away during my phrenzy. She perceived I was so affected with the loss of it, that she was obliged to return it. I put it into a purse which contained Adelaid's picture, and seized every opportunity to retire and read it. ——

My

My mother, who was by nature compassionate, sympathized with me, and endeavoured to sooth my cares ; she knew the necessity of humouring my grief, and that the cure must be left to time. She suffered me to talk of Adelaid, and often herself would begin the conversation. And as she found that the only thing which administered consolation, was the idea of my beloved, she minutely related to me her persuading Adelaid to marry.—

“ I implore your pardon, my son,
“ for the misfortune I have unhappily
“ brought on you ; and which I

“ could not apprehend would have so
“ sensibly affected you. Your impris-
“ onment made me fear not only for
“ your health, but your life. I was
“ no stranger to the inflexibility of
“ your father, who would never have
“ set you at liberty, while there was
“ a possibility of your marrying Ade-
“ laid. I was determined to speak to
“ that generous girl. I wished her to
“ partake of my fears ; she looked
“ not on them as the trifling appre-
“ hensions of maternal fondness, but
“ seemed more sensibly affected than
“ myself. She deemed my reasons
“ so powerful, that she resolved im-
“ mediately to marry. To which her
“ duty

“ duty contributed not a little ; for
“ her father resenting the usage of
“ the Count of Comminge, pressed
“ her to give her hand to the worthiest
“ of your rivals. I asked her whom
“ she intended to honour by her
“ choice. It is to me, said she, to-
“ tally indifferent, since I cannot give
“ my hand to him who has long pos-
“ sessed my heart.” —

Two days after this conversation, I heard that the Marquis of Benavides was preferred to all his rivals. This was to all a matter of astonishment ; for Benavides person is odious to a degree, which his meanness of spirit and

and capricious humour have rendered
still more despicable. I dread the con-
sequences !—I saw and spake to her a
few days previous to her nuptials.
“ I am, said she, preparing myself
“ for misery ; but marry I must and
“ will. And since I am confident
“ that there is no other step to deliver
“ your son, I reproach myself for
“ every moment’s delay. Yet this
“ marriage, which is solely for his
“ welfare, will probably be the most
“ intolerable of my miseries. I shall
“ at least convince him by my choice,
“ that his interest alone determined
“ me. Pity me, my dear madam, for
“ I deserve your compassion ; by my
“ behaviour

“ behaviour to the Marquis of Be-
“ navides I will merit your esteem.”

My mother added, that the Count of Comminge had acquainted Adelaid with my burning the title deeds, and publickly reproached her for it. She solemnly declared to me, says my mother, that nothing so sensibly touched her as your generosity in concealing the favour you had conferred on her family.

Our time passed away in such like converse, and although my melancholy was excessive, it yet had that inexpressible sweetness, which attends the consciousness of being beloved. Some months

months had elapsed, when my mother received a letter from my father, ordering her immediate return. He had scarce deigned to take any notice of my illness ; for such had been his behaviour to me, that it had entirely estranged his affections. My mother pressed me to return, but I begged leave to continue in the country, to which, after much importunity, she assented.

I was determined to live the life of a recluse, and should never have quitted my solitude, had it not been for the tender affection I owed my mother. Sometimes I formed schemes to see
Adelaid,

Adelaid, which the fear of disobliging her as often prevented. After wavering thus for some days, I reasoned myself into a belief of the innocence of seeing her, if without her knowledge or consent.—

I was so riveted to this scheme, that I determined to send my servant to Bourdeaux to enquire after the Marquis of Benavides family. This man had lived with me from my infancy, had waited on me at the Wells, and during my illness had been again permitted to attend me. After having given him all requisite instructions, and repeated them to him again and

G again,

again, I suffered him to depart. On his arrival at Bourdeaux, he learned that the Marquis was not there, but had retired into the country with his lady soon after their marriage.—My servant, who had assumed the name of St. Laurent, wrote to me for further orders. I ordered him to Biscay, the country seat of Benavides without loss of time, for my impatience to see Adelaid was grown irresistible. St. Laurent was near six weeks on his journey. On his return he told me, that after much trouble and variety of fruitless schemes, he at length gained admittance into the house in the character of an architect, that he fortunately

nately understood the business, having been originally educated to it, and that the Marquis of Benavides was in great want of such a person.—“ I believe, “ added he, that madam de Benavides “ recollects me; certain am I at least, “ that my first appearance called up a “ blush on her countenance.” He informed me, that she lived the most retired and melancholy life ; that her husband was perpetually with her, was fond of her to excess, but that jealousy was the only proof he had given her of his affections ; which he carried to such lengths, that his own brother was not permitted to see her, save only in his presence.——

I found, on enquiry, that this brother was a young gentleman the very reverse of the Marquis, and was as universally esteemed as the other was despised ; and that he appeared much attached to his sister-in law. This information did not immediately make any impression on me. The deplorable situation of madam de Benavides, and my anxiety to see her, engrossed my whole attention. St. Laurent said, he had taken proper measures for my introduction ; that I must assume the character of a painter, as the Marquis had ordered him to bring an adept in that art. Nothing more was requisite than to prepare for our

4

journey.—

journey.—I wrote to my mother, and informed her, that I was going to spend a few weeks at a friend's house. I then immediately with St. Laurent took the road to Biscay. There was no end to my enquiries about madam de Benavides, I wished to hear the minutest trifles which concerned her. St. Laurent could give me but little satisfaction, as he had seldom seen her. He said, she passed whole days in her own apartment, with no other company but a little dog, which she seemed extravagantly fond of. This circumstance gave me peculiar pleasure, as I had presented the dog to her; and I flattered myself,

that she carefessed him on that account. When a man is truely wretched, he dwells on every trifle which fleeted by unnoticed in the sunshine of prosperity. The heart, which needeth consolation, catches at every shadow. St. Laurent spake much of young Benavides attachment to his sister, that he often soothed his brother's passions, and that he contributed greatly to the relief of Adelaid's melancholy. He exhorted me not to attempt speaking to her. I do not, said he, mention the danger of a discovery, since your own danger would be too trifling a motive to restrain you; but consider that you will expose her, who is dearer

dearer to you than life, to the fury of a jealous and implacable husband. I was persuaded, that the seeing of Ade-laid would be so great a satisfaction, that I should not wish to speak to her; I therefore gave my word to St. Lau-rent, that my circumspection should outstrip his fears.

After many days journey, which ap-peared years to my impatience, we arrived in safety at Biscay, where I was introduced to the Marquis, and immediately employed. I was lodged with the pretended architect, whose business was to superintend the works. I continued my employ for many days

G 4 without

without seeing the object of my soul. At length I saw the dear lovely Adelaid pass the window of the room in which I was painting. The evening was fine, and she was walking in the garden with the little dog, but seemed indifferent to the pleasing objects round. There was in her gait an air of languor, and melancholy was seated on her brow. My God ! how can I describe the anguish of my soul ? I remained like a statue at the window waiting her return ; when it was so late, that I could not distinguish her as she passed ; but my heart told me it was Adelaid.——

The second time I saw her was in the chapel. I had so placed myself, that I could remark every action unobserved. I never once could catch her eye, for which I ought to have been thankful ; as she most assuredly would have obliged me to leave the house. Yet I was affected at having escaped her notice, and returned from the chapel more sick at heart, more heavily oppressed, than when I entered it. I had as yet contrived no plan for discovering myself, but was afraid, that if occasion offered, my integrity would yield to the temptation.

Young

Young Benavides likewise gave me much uneasiness. He was often with me, and notwithstanding the apparent difference of our situations, treated me with a familiarity which required at least my gratitude. But his agreeable behaviour and extraordinary merit, which I could not but observe, restrained my acknowledgments. I dreaded in him a rival, and perceived in the whole tenor of his behaviour, a species of melancholy too nearly resembling mine, not to suspect the cause from which it sprang. But what wedded me to my suspicions, was his saying that I was in love. The melancholy, said he, with which I see
you

you oppressed arises from the heart. Can I serve you ? Speak your wants, it will be to me a satisfaction to relieve them. The unfortunate in general meet with my compassion, but yours is a misfortune which I more particularly pity. —

I thanked the Chevalier for his obliging offers with an ill grace. I could not deny my love ; but told him, that such was my situation, that time alone must work the cure. If said he you can expect that, I am no stranger to a person yet more miserable than yourself.

When

When he was retired, I made a thousand reflections on our preceding conversation. I concluded that he was in love, and that his sister was the object of his affections. Every circumstance, which I most minutely examined, confirmed me in my suspicions. I saw that he was attached to Adelaid, and that he looked at her with my eyes. Yet I was not jealous. My esteem for Adelaid banished such ungenerous sentiments from my heart: but I could not suppress my fears, that the sight of an amiable young man, ever studious to oblige, might diminish her regard for me,

me, who was the innocent but unhappy author of all her woes.

My thoughts were in this train, when Adelaid attended by the Chevalier, entered the apartment I was painting. I cannot conceive, said she, why you press me thus to see the alterations which are making in this room? You know I have no taste for painting.—I trust madam, said I, looking full upon her, that if you will condescend to observe this painting, you will not repent your complaisance. Adelaid struck with my voice immediately knew me.—She trembled, turned pale, and observing that the

smell

smell of the paint was disagreeable, left the apartment without deigning me the least regard.

I was motionless with astonishment, and overwhelmed with grief. "What have I done? It is true indeed I have disobeyed her orders; but if she loved me, she would pardon a crime which tends only to shew the excess of my passion."

I hastily therefore concluded, that since Adelaid did not love me, she must necessarily love another. This thought drove me even to madness. From that moment only did I date my

my misery. St. Laurent entered the room and found me in an agitation, which filled him with apprehension.
“ What is the matter, said he, what
“ accident has happened ?”

“ I am undone, Adelaid ~~loves~~ me
“ not. I again repeated, Adelaid
“ loves me not. Is it possible ? Alas !
“ from this cruel moment have I not
“ reason to complain. What misery,
“ what torture would I not undergo
“ to recal the happiness I have lost ?
“ That happiness, which was all in
“ all to me ; that happiness, which
“ made me smile in misery.”—

St. Laurent

St. Laurent could not comprehend from my broken sentences and wild transports of complaint, what was the occasion of them. I was at length sufficiently composed to give him information. I do not, said he, apprehend, that you have just cause to drive you to despair. Madam de Benavides is undoubtedly offended at the step you have taken, and intends by her indifference to punish you for it. Besides she might be afraid of discovering you, had she seemed to regard you.—No, no, replied I, love has not that command over itself. Love is not thus circumspectly prudent. The heart obeys its first impulse.

pulse. I must see her, I must reproach her with her inconstancy. Alas ! after what she has done, ought she in this cruel manner to rob me of my life ? Why did she not suffer me to remain in prison ? then I had been happy ; for then I should have thought myself beloved.

St. Laurent, afraid that any one should see me in that deplorable condition, conducted me to my chamber. I spent the whole night in torments inexpressible. I had no sooner formed an idea, than it gave way to some new phantom of my brain. One moment I condemned my suspicions as un-

H generous,

generous, and nourished them as realities the next. Now I acknowledged my injustice in wishing Adelaid to preserve a tenderness, which must be productive of misery ; then I reproached my selfishness in loving her less for her sake than my own. " Since she loves me " no more, said I to St. Laurent, " since she has transferred her affection, I will breath out my soul " at her feet ; but before death shall " close my eye, will bid her a last " adieu ; one tender, last farewell : " she shall hear no reproach from me. " My grief, which cannot be suppressed,

“ pressed, will more than sufficiently
“ reproach her.”

I fortified myself in this resolution, and was determined to put it into execution. St. Laurent told me to take the opportunity, while the Chevalier was hunting, and when the Marquis was engaged with his steward: and made me promise, the better to lull suspicion asleep, to work as usual, and to talk of my approaching departure.

I resumed my brush, and flattered myself that Adelaid would pay me another visit. Every footstep awoke

my attention ; every noise alarmed me. I had been in this state of anxious expectation for some days, and had almost bidden adieu to hope ; I therefore was determined to seize the first moment of her being alone. That moment at length arrived. I saw Adelaid enter her chamber alone ; I knew that the Chevalier was engaged in hunting, and that the Marquis was in an under room with one of his tenants. I followed Adelaid with such precipitation, that she did not immediately observe me ; she would have fled the moment she saw me, had I not detained her by catching hold of her robe ; " Fly me not madam, said I,

" let me for a moment enjoy your
 " presence? — That instant past,
 " and I will trouble you no more.—
 " I will leave you, for ever leave you;
 " and expiate by my death the mi-
 " series I have occasioned you. For
 " I cannot, will not survive the loss
 " of your affections. I hope the
 " Chevalier will be more fortunate
 " than - - - - - Adelaid, whom
 " surprise and anxiety had hitherto
 " kept silent, interrupted me at these
 " words, and casting a scornful look
 " at me, dare you, says she, re-
 " proach me? Dare you suspect me?
 " You - - - - - No, my lovely Ade-
 " laid, replied I, throwing myself

“ at her feet, I harbour no injurious
 “ suspicions ; pardon the words, to
 “ which my heart assented not.”

I pardon you from my very soul,
 said she, but leave me immediately,
 and never see me more ; consider, that
 it is for you, and you alone, that I am
 the most miserable of all human be-
 ings, wish you to make me the most
 criminal ?—Your orders, replied I,
 shall be most religiously observed ;
 but promise me at least, that you hate
 me not.—

I still continued kneeling, although
 Adelaid had entreated me to rise.

Those who love, can be no strangers to the charms of that engaging attitude. I was yet in that posture, when the door opened, and the Marquis, with his sword drawn, rushed in upon us.——— You die, wretch, says he to his wife, you shall this moment die. His threat would have been immediately executed, had I not thrown myself between them, drawing my sword at the same instant. “ I will begin “ my vengeance then with you, ac- “ companying his words with a thrust, “ which wounded me in the shoulder. “ Life for its own sake was not “ worth defending ; but I hated Be- “ nevides too much to yield it up

“ a sacrifice to his fury. Besides, his intent to murder his wife had made me deaf to the voice of reason; “ I returned the assault, and in a moment left him motionless on the floor.”

The domestic sticks, alarmed by the cries of Madam de Benavides, entered the room the instant I was withdrawing my sword from their master’s body. They fell on me, and disarmed me without the least resistance. The sight of Madam de Benavides prostrate on the floor, and weeping over her bleeding husband deprived me of every sentiment

sentiment but grief. I was draged from the chamber, and secured.

Then I saw (when left to my reflections) the abyss into which I had plunged my Adelaid. Her husband killed before her eyes, and killed by me, could not fail encouraging suspicions injurious to her reputation. What had I not to reproach myself with ? To me she owed the birth of her misfortunes, which my imprudence had now completed.

“ She ought to hate me ; I justly
“ merit it. My sole remaining hope
“ was, that I should not be known.

“ The

“ The idea of being thought a villain,
“ which on any other occasion would
“ have chilled my soul with horror,
“ had now no fears for me. Adelaid,
“ said I, will do me justice, and Ade-
“ laid is all the world to me.”

This thought administered me some tranquillity ; which, my impatience to answer their interrogatories interrupted. At midnight my door opened, and the Chevalier surprised me by his presence. Fear not, says he, I wait on you by Madam de Benavides order. Such is her opinion of me, that she has concealed nothing respecting you.—Probably, added he with

with a sigh, which would not be suppressed, had she known me better, she would not have been thus explicit; notwithstanding that, I will not betray her confidence; if possible, I will save you both.—You shall not, said I, save me, had I thousand lives, I would sacrifice them to Madam de Benanides justification.

I then explained my design of remaining unknown, and suffering as an assassin. Your scheme, replied the Chevalier, might be feasible, were my brother dead, which from your conversation, I perceive, you apprehend. But his wound, though dangerous, is

not

not mortal. And the first sign he gave of life, was his order to confine his wife in her own apartment. That may be sufficient to convince you of his suspicions, you will therefore throw away your life an useless sacrifice. Fly therefore immediately; I can do to night what will not be in my power to-morrow.—

What, said I, then will be the fate of Madam de Benavides? I cannot prevail on myself to withdraw from the danger which I have brought on her, and leave her to the mercy of her unrelenting husband. I have already, replied the Chevalier, told you that
your

your presence can only render her situation still more dreadful. Since Madam de Benavides insists on it, and her interest requires it, I will abscond! But I hoped by the sacrifice of my life, to gain her pity, though her pity I do not merit.—I am a wretch unworthy even to die for her. Protect her Chevalier, you are generous, you are humane ; her innocence, her misfortunes, plead powerfully for her. You may judge, answered he, by what has inadvertently, or rather unavoidably escaped me, that Madam de Benavides interest is so dear to my repose, that I shall dedicate my life to her service. Alas ! I should think my

my services amply recompensed, if I could flatter myself that she had never loved. But who, that has not suffered like you, can hope to touch a heart like hers.—But go, continued he, profit by the darkness. He took me by the hand, and led me through the courts of the castle.

I was so full of indignation at my own behaviour, that in a phrenzy of despair, I prayed, if it was possible to be yet more miserable.

The Chevalier at my departure advised me to go into a convent of religious at some small distance. There, said

said he, you must remain for some days to elude the search I shall be necessitated to make. I have in this letter recommended you to the head of the order, in him you may most implicitly confide.

I loitered for some time about the environs of the castle unable to prevail on myself to remove. But the hopes of hearing news of Adelaid determined me to proceed to the convent.

I arrived there at day break, and delivered my recommendation to the Abbot, who conducted me to a chamber.

ber. My extreme weakness, and my clothes stained with blood, made him suspect that I was wounded. Before he could ask me the question I had swooned away. The surgeon of the convent was immediately sent for to examine my wound, which was much inflamed by the sharpness of the night, and irritated by the fatigue I had undergone. When I was alone with the father, to whom I had been recommended, I begged him to send to the village for St. Laurent, who, I did apprehend was concealed there. My suspicion was well founded.—St. Laurent returned with the messenger. The poor fellow's affliction on hearing that

that I was wounded, was excessive. When he approached my bed, I told him if he would save my life, he must enquire into Madam de Benavides situation, and acquaint himself with every particular; for that my sufferings were more dreadful than death itself in all its horrors. He promised to execute my commands with fidelity and dispatch, and left me to prepare his measures. A fever attacked me with great violence, my wound grew dangerous, and I twice submitted my shoulder to the incisions of the surgeon. But such was the disorder of my mind, that I regarded not the malady of my body.

I

Madam

Madam de Benavides was ever before my eyes, weeping and prostrated on the floor by her wounded husband, in the same dismal attitude as when I left her chamber. I reviewed the misfortunes of her life; I found myself the author of them all: Her marriage, her choice of a husband in every respect odious, these were sacrifices made for me; for me who had filled up the measure of her misfortunes by ruining her reputation. I reflected on my ill founded jealousy, which though it vanished at a word and died in its very birth, I could not pardon.—What a base ungenerous suspicion! Adelaid ought to look on me, as

as on a wretch unworthy her esteem. I must be odious to her memory ! This idea all dreadful as it was, the rage with which I was animated against myself enabled me to support. In eight days St. Laurent returned with news ill adapted to calm the transports of my grief. He told me that the Marquis continued in a very dangerous situation ; that his wife appeared inconsolable, and that his brother affected searching after me with vigour. As every incident was unpropitious, death should have been my only wish ; but I thought I ought to live for Madam de Benavides justification.

The Abbot, a witness to my sighs and tears, took pity on me. He was a man of address, well acquainted with the world, and had much philanthropy in his disposition. But a variety of accidents had at length fixed him in a cloister. He successfully endeavoured to gain my friendship by his sensibility, and by degrees he won my confidence. He became so necessary to my ease, that I could not consent to his leaving me for a moment. I related to him my misfortunes—I never saw a man with more goodness of heart.—I repeated the same story a thousand times; as often he seemed to hear me with attention,

attention, to enter into all my sorrows, and partake of all my cares. I was indebted to him for the knowledge of what passed at the Marquis's house. He told me that Benavides was declared to be out of danger, that Madam de Benavides lived more than usually retired, and was thought to be in a declining way. He added, that it was necessary I should prepare for my departure as soon as possible least my retreat should be discovered, which would bring fresh troubles on Madam de Benavides.

I was as yet unable to travel, for my fever had never left me, and my

I 3 wound

wound was still unhealed. I had been in the convent upwards of two months, when I observed Don Jerome to be more than usually thoughtful.—His brow was clouded with care ; he feared to catch my eye, and studiously avoided all converse with me. The unhappy are ever most compassionate ! but for him I had a most sincere esteem, therefore was going to enquire the cause of his uneasiness, when St. Laurent entered my chamber, and told me that the Chevalier was in the convent and had enquired for me.—

He here ! and you not mention him Don Jerome ? I tremble for Madam

dam de Benavides.—For pity's sake
ease me of the cruel anxiety with
which I am tortured even to madness.
After some hesitation said Don Je-
rome embracing me, I wish with all
my soul that I could for ever ease
you of your pain.—

“ Alas, cried I, Adelaid is dead !
“ Benavides has sacrificed her to his
“ revenge.—You answer not—I
“ have then no hope.—No—it is not
“ Benavides, it is I who plunged
“ the poniard into her heart.—Had
“ it not been for me, she yet had lived.
“ My Adelaid is dead ! has closed
“ her eyes for ever ! No more shall I

I 4 “ behold

“ behold her ! She is gone, for ever
“ gone ! She is dead ! and yet I live !
“ Why do I not follow her ? Why
“ do I not revenge her death ? But
“ no ! to die will be a joy ; since the
“ grave will swallow up all my cares.
“ I will live, and be my own avenger.

“ My violent agitation burst open
“ my wound, which was not per-
“ fectly closed ; it bled again, and
“ I fell into so deep a swoon, that
“ they thought me dead, but after
“ some hours I revived. Don Je-
“ rome was apprehensive I should
“ attempt my life, and charged St.
“ Laurent not to leave me for a mo-
“ ment.

“ ment. My despair took another
“ turn.—I observed a mournful si-
“ lence, but never shed a tear. Then
“ it was that I determined to bid a-
“ dieu to society, and deliver myself
“ a prey to melancholy. The idea
“ of tormenting myself was not wholly
“ devoid of pleasure. I therefore
“ begged to see the Chevalier
“ D'orsanne, as his presence would
“ renew my pain.”

He came and seated himself by
my bed. For some time we remained
silent. He looked at me with eyes
surcharged with tears. At length I
spake.—You are too generous, Sir,
in

in pitying a wretch you ought to hate. But I beg you will not conceal one circumstance of woe. I shall, answered he, only add to your misery and my own ; but as you insist on it, will gratify your curiosity ; when you will know, that you are not alone unhappy, since in my recital I shall be obliged to make mention of myself.—

“ I had never seen Madam de Benavides before her marriage ; my brother, who was engaged in business of consequence at Bourdeaux, became her lover ; and although he had many rivals in every respect preferable to himself, yet by I know

“ I know not what fatality, on him
“ she fixed her choice. Soon after
“ the nuptials, they came into the
“ country ; it was there I first saw her.
“ I admired her person, but was en-
“ amoured with the graces of her
“ mind. Yet the regard I had for
“ an amiable woman whom I ten-
“ derly loved, steeled me against her
“ charms. My brother would not
“ consent to our union, but I hoped
“ to engage my sister-in-law to be my
“ advocate with her husband. The
“ father of my mistress, nettled at the
“ Marquis’s refusal, gave me but a
“ very short time to win his consent,
“ and declared both to me and his

“ daughter,

“ daughter, that at the expiration of
“ that time he would marry her to
“ another.

“ The friendship with which Ma-
“ dam de Benavides treated me,
“ prompted me to beg her assistance.
“ I went often to her apartment deter-
“ mined to speak to her, and as often
“ I suffered the most trivial circum-
“ stance to prevent me. Mean while
“ the time prescribed expired. I had
“ before received many letters from
“ my mistress, pressing me to be ex-
“ peditious; my answers, unperceived
“ by me, were fraught with cold-
“ ness, which subjected me to her
“ reproaches.

“ reproaches. I could not but think
“ them unjust, and told her my op-
“ nion.—She believed herself for-
“ saken; and indignation operating
“ with her father’s entreaties, pre-
“ vailed on her to marry. She her-
“ self acquainted me with it. Her
“ letter, though teeming with re-
“ proach, was tender; and she con-
“ cluded with requesting me never
“ to see her more. I had most sin-
“ cerely loved her, and believe our
“ love was mutual; I could not there-
“ fore bear my loss without unfeigned
“ sorrow. I feared she was unhappy,
“ and upbraided myself with being
“ the author of her misery.

“ These

“ These different thoughts were
“ playing on my imagination as I
“ was walking in the grove near the
“ castle, when I accidentally met
“ Madam de Benavides. She observed
“ my uneasiness, and kindly enquired
“ the reason. A secret reluctance re-
“ strained my answer. I could not
“ prevail on myself to tell her I was
“ in love; but the pleasure to talk
“ to her of love, though for another
“ object, tempted me much. I dared
“ not examine my own sentiments in
“ respect to my sister-in-law. At
“ length, after much hesitation, I men-
“ tioned the cause of my uneasiness,
“ and

“ and shewed her the letter of Ma-
“ demoiselle de Valiere.”

“ Why have you thus been silent
“ said she ? had you mentioned it to
“ me, I might perhaps have gained
“ your brother’s consent, though he
“ gave you the denial. How much
“ I pity you ! how sincerely concern-
“ ed am I for her ! She will be most
“ unhappy !” “ Madam de Benavides
“ compassion for the lady induced
“ me to think that she had not a
“ disadvantageous opinion of me.
“ To lessen her concern, I told her
“ that Mademoiselle’s husband was a
“ man of merit, of considerable rank,

“ and

“ and had a prospect of a princely
“ fortune.” “ You deceive yourself,
“ says she, if you suppose those things
“ can make her happy. Nothing can
“ compensate for the loss of him we
“ love. It is a dreadful thing to sub-
“ stitute duty in the place of affec-
“ tion.” “ Frequent sighs escaped her
“ during this conversation; and her
“ eyes were dim with tears.

“ She said no more, but left me.
“ I could not follow her; grief had
“ deprived me both of speech and
“ motion. I could not but see what
“ I had hitherto shut my eyes against,
“ that I was in love with my sister.—

“ I like-

“ I likewise suspected that her heart
“ was engaged to another. I re-
“ collected a thousand circumstances
“ which before I had not attended to.
“ Her taste for solitude, her indiffe-
“ rence to amusements, her excessive
“ melancholy, which I had attributed
“ to my brother’s usage, seemed now
“ to spring from another cause. Re-
“ flections the most gloomy presented
“ themselves to my view. Every
“ duty social and divine forbade my
“ love.” “ Were not her affections
“ engaged to another, said I, my love
“ though hopeless, yet would have
“ its sweets. Her friendship without
“ a blush of guilt I might demand.

K

“ But

" But what avails her friendship,
 " while her heart is warmed with the
 " more lively sentiments of love?"
 " I was conscious that I ought to
 " wean myself of a passion so fatal
 " to my repose and repugnant to
 " my honour; and determined to fly
 " those dangers, which I dared not
 " meet. I returned to the castle to
 " apprise my brother of my depa-
 " rture; but the sight of Madam de
 " Benavides obliterated my resolu-
 " tions. Yet to have some pretext
 " to stay, I cheated myself into the
 " persuasion, that my presence pre-
 " vented in some measure my bro-
 " ther's ill usage.

" It

" It was about that time you arrived at the castle. Your air and manner contradicted your profession.
 " I therefore made you a tender of my friendship, and wished to obtain your confidence, as I intended to engage you to draw Madam de Benavides picture. For in defiance of all the illusions of love I retained my purpose of leaving the house; and as I intended never to return, I was extremely solicitous to carry with me her picture. The manner in which you refused my advances, told me I could have no dependance on you; I therefore applied to another painter the very day you

“ had that unhappy encounter with
“ my brother. Judge of my sur-
“ prise, when on my return I learned
“ what had passed. My brother pre-
“ served a gloomy silence, but darted
“ looks of fury at his wife, who was
“ weeping by him. As soon as I had
“ entered the room, “ deliver me, said
“ he, from the sight of this crocodile
“ who has betrayed me, conduct
“ her to her apartment, and let her
“ be confined.” I would have spoken,
but he instantly stopped me by say-
ing, “ Obey me this moment, or
“ see my face no more.” — “ I was
“ obliged to obey. I approached my
“ sister-in-law, and begged leave to
“ speak

“ speak with her in her own apartment. “ Well, said she, shedding a flood of tears, execute your orders.”—

“ These words, which carried with them the air of reproach, cut me to the heart. Before my brother I dared not reply; but as soon as I had waited on Madam de Benavides to her apartment, madam, said I, with a look expressive of the most melancholy tenderness, do you con- found me with your persecutor? “ I enter into all your cares, “ and will freely lay down my life “ to serve you. I shudder at the

K 3 “ thought,

“ thought, it may be ill grounded,
“ but I tremble for your life.—For
“ heaven’s sake fly the danger which
“ awaits you, and suffer me to con-
“ duct you to a place of safety.”

“ I know not that the Marquis will
“ sacrifice me to his vengeance; but
“ I know that it is my duty to con-
“ tinue with him, and my duty I will
“ fulfil, though the consequence be
“ fatal. She was silent for a moment,
“ then renewing her discourse, I am
“ going, continued she, by my confi-
“ dence, to give you the strongest
“ assurance of my esteem. But I
“ must, at the same time that I pay you
“ that

“ that compliment, attend also to your
 “ welfare. Return therefore to your
 “ brother immediately, a long con-
 “ versation may beget suspicion, but
 “ see me again as soon as possible.”—

“ My immediate departure was an
 “ instance of my obedience. The sur-
 “ geon had given orders, that the Mar-
 “ quis should be left alone ; I there-
 “ fore instantly returned to his lady,
 “ perplexed with a thousand doubts
 “ and inquietudes. I wished to know,
 “ what at the same time I was afraid
 “ to hear.—Madam de Benavides men-
 “ tioned her knowledge of you, and
 “ confessed the affection which was so

K 4. “ deeply

“ deeply rooted in your heart; neither
“ did she dissemble her own inclinati-
“ ons.”—Have I then (cried I, inter-
rupting the Chevalier) have I won
the affections of the most lovely of her
sex?—and have I lost her?—

This idea penetrated my heart with
such tender sentiments, that I melted
into tears.—“ Yes, continued he, you
“ were loved indeed.—Her every word
“ spake tenderness, her every look af-
“ fection. Her heart was wholly yours.
“ I perceived, that she dwelled with
“ pleasure on every circumstance of
“ your behaviour. She acknowledged
“ that she knew you the moment she
“ entered

“ entered the room you was painting,
“ that she had written to you, entreat-
“ ing you to leave the house, but never
“ had an opportunity to give it you.
“ She then minutely informed me of
“ the Marquis’s surprising you at the
“ very instant you was bidding her an
“ eternal adieu ; and that he would
“ have sacrificed her to his fury, had
“ it not been for your interposition.
“ Save him, added she, save my unfor-
“ tunate lover from his impending fate.
“ Too well I know, that he will suffer
“ the most agonizing tortures without
“ confession ; the rack will not extort
“ from him a discovery which might
“ expose me to ruin.

“ Your

" Your good opinion, Madam, said
 " I, is a full recompence for all his
 " sufferings." " To you (replied Madam
 " de Benavides) I have discovered with-
 " out disguise my weakness. But re-
 " member, although I have not been
 " mistress of my inclinations, yet I have
 " of my conduct ; and that I have not
 " even been guilty of an indiscretion
 " the most rigid duty could condemn."

" Alas madam, to me your justifica-
 " tion is superfluous ! that our hearts
 " are not at our own disposal, is a me-
 " lancholy truth, of which I am a most
 " unfortunate example.—Be assured
 " that I will serve you to the utmost,
 " and

“ and will, if possible, set the Count
 “ of Comminge at liberty, who (par-
 “ don me madam) is not perhaps the
 “ most unhappy.—

“ In pronouncing these words I with-
 “ drew, not daring to lift my eyes
 “ from the ground. I fled to my
 “ own apartment, and considered the
 “ part I was to act. I determined at
 “ all events to deliver you ; but I was
 “ debating, whether I ought not like-
 “ wise to fly myself: for my sufferings,
 “ during the recital of her misfortunes,
 “ convinced me of the excess of my
 “ passion, and I knew the necessity of
 “ weaning myself of an attachment so

“ repugnant

“ repugnant to every principle of virtue. But the cruelty of leaving Madam de Benavides to the fury of her husband, determined me after much wavering, to contribute by my stay to her assistance, but most studiously to avoid her presence.

“ I was many days without seeing her, but my brother's being in imminent danger obliged me to wait on Madam de Benavides.

“ If, said she, I had lost the Marquis by the common course of nature, I should not have been so sensibly affected. But the unhappy part I have been

" been innocently engaged in, makes
 " me insupportably wretched. I regard
 " not his ill treatment, but I tremble
 " at the idea of his dying with a bad
 " opinion of my conduct. Should he
 " survive, I trust, my innocence will
 " prevail over appearance, and that I
 " again shall enjoy, as I have merited,
 " his esteem.—I must likewise, madam,
 " replied I, endeavour to obtain yours.
 " I implore forgiveness for the disco-
 " very of my sentiments—sentiments
 " I could neither prevent nor conceal.
 " I know not that I can conquer this
 " unhappy passion, but I most solemn-
 " ly declare that I will never affront you
 " more by revealing it. Had not your
 " interest

“ interest detained me, I before had
“ banished myself your presence. I
“ confess, replied Madam de Benavi-
“ des, that you have added much to
“ the measure of my misery. Fate has
“ deprived me of the consolation
“ which I found in your friendship.

“ Her tears were more persuasive
“ than all the powers of reason. I was
“ ashamed to aggravate the miseries of
“ one so wretched.—No, madam, you
“ shall not lose that friendship you was
“ so gracious as to value. My struggles
“ to obliterate all traces of my error
“ shall render me not wholly undeserv-
“ ing your esteem.

“ I found

“ I found myself on taking leave
“ more tranquil, and perceived a com-
“ posure in my mind, to which I had
“ been before a stranger. So far from
“ avoiding her presence, I took every
“ opportunity of being with her, that
“ I might have new reafons for con-
“ firming myself in my duty. Success
“ smiled on my endeavours; and by
“ degrees my passion glided into the
“ more tranquil path of friendship. I
“ acquainted Madam de Benavides with
“ the progress of my reformation; she
“ confessed her acknowledgments, as
“ for a service I had done her, and by
“ way of recompence gave me moredif-
“ tinguished marks of her confidence.

“ My

“ My heart would sometimes revolt,
“ but reason kept its state. —

“ My brother at length recovered ;
“ he had not, during his illness, suffer-
“ ed his wife to see him ; and before he
“ left his chamber, Madam de Bena-
“ vides was seized with a fever. She
“ was indebted to youth for her reco-
“ very ; and I had reason to conclude
“ that her illness would have effected a
“ reconciliation. —

“ Although the Marquis in the
“ height of his illness had peremptorily
“ refused her solicitations to see him ;
“ yet he now enquired after her, with
“ an earnestness bordering on affection.

“ She

" She was in a fair way of recovery, when the Marquis ordered me to attend him. I have some business of consequence, said he, which requires my presence at Angers ; my health will not suffer me to make the journey, you will oblige me in transacting the business ; I have ordered my servants and equipage to attend you, and beg you will use all possible expedition. I was so much younger than my brother, that I respected him as a parent ; and as I had no reason to excuse myself from the journey, I prepared for my immediate departure. But I thought this instance of my complaisance entitled me to recommend

L

Madam

Madam de Benavides to the return of his favour. What did I not urge to mitigate his wrath! I flattered myself I had moved his pity, and that his heart relented."

" I did love Madam de Benavides, said my brother, with the purest affection, she yet has strong hold upon my heart; time and her future conduct may perhaps efface from my memory, what my eyes were such melancholy witnesses of." " I did not pretend to dispute with him the justness of his anger. I thought it of some consequence to have allayed his fury. I begged permission to acquaint my

sister

sister with the hopes he had given me, to which he readily assented. Poor woman ! she heard the news with joy. I know, said she, that I never can be happy with the Marquis, but it will be great consolation to conform to the dictates of my duty.—

“ I took my leave, having again assured her of my brother’s favourable sentiments. One of the domesticks, in whom I could confide, received my injunctions to be most minutely attentive to every thing which regarded his mistress, and to acquaint me with it. After these precautions, which I deemed sufficient, I took the

road to Angers. I had been there fifteen days without hearing from the castle. At length I received a letter from the domestick, who told me that my brother had dismissed all his servants, except one man, whom he still retained in his service. This letter filled my soul with apprehension ; without finishing my business, I took post immediately.

“ I was on my journey from thence when I received the fatal news of Madam de Benavides’s death ; my brother, who had written at the same time, appeared so affected at her loss, that I could not believe him guilty of
contri-

contributing to so melancholy an event. He said, that his affection had weaned him so much from his resentment, that nothing but her sudden death prevented his absolute forgiveness. I have learnt since my arrival here, that she relapsed soon after my departure, and expired in three days. My brother remains plunged in the deepest melancholy, denies himself to every one, and begs that I will not as yet wait upon him. I obey his commands with pleasure ; since every object there would recal Madam de Benavides to my memory, and more sensibly aggravate my sorrows,

“ I fear her death has revived my shameful passion; as I know not whether love does not contribute more than friendship to my tears. I am so tortured with my own melancholy reflections, that I am determined to go immediately into Hungary, where I hope, amidst the perils of war, I shall either recover my long-lost tranquillity, or find in an honourable death a period to my woes.”—

I would have thanked him for his melancholy narrative, but my voice was choaked with sighs, my eyes were dim with tears. He seemed not less affected; and withdrew with

Don

Don Jerome to leave me to my reflections.

The relation I had just heard spurred on my impatience to bid adieu to society, and to secrete myself where melancholy reigned alone. My earnestness to reduce my resolutions into practice contributed greatly to my recovery. My strength returned, my wound closed, and I was after some weeks languishing able to endure the fatigues of a journey. My last interview with Don Jerome was very affecting. His words, his looks, his wishes, breathed the honest air of friendship and affection. But I was

so absorbed in the idea of Adelaid, that my heart made but an ungrateful return. I concealed my design, least the officiousness of my friends should prevent my putting it in execution. I wrote to my mother by St. Laurent, whom I recommended to her protection; I gave her a minute detail of every circumstance of my misfortunes; I mentioned my resolution of sequestering myself from the world, and told her, that I thought it my duty to remove from her eye, a wretch whose only wish was death, and that if she was desirous of obliging me, she would not attempt discovering my retreat. I gave St. Laurent at his

departure my all, having reserved a mere sufficiency for my journey. Madam de Benavides's letter and picture, which I always carried at my heart, were the only riches I valued and retained.—

I left the convent, and came without any interruption to the Abbey of la Trappe. Immediately on my arrival I requested the habit, which the principal of the order refused, alledging that I must first go through my novitiate. I completed my trial without a murmur, and when I was asked whether the meanness of my diet and the austerities prescribed were not unequal

equal to my resolution ; such had been the power of my grief, that I answered, that I was a stranger both to the coarseness of diet, and the austeries which they mentioned.—

My insensibility was construed into zeal, and I was immediately admitted. The assurance that my tears could not now be interrupted, and that my whole life wou'd be spent in the exercise of affliction administered me some consolation. The solitude, the silence of this seat of misery, together with the melancholy which was stampt on every face, contributed not a little to the nourishing of my grief. I
went

went through the duties of the convent without repining, for to me every thing was equally indifferent. I every day secreted myself in the bosom of the woods, where I red my Adelaid's letter, and dwelt on every word : there I examined her picture, till imagination gave it life ; I bathed both the one and the other with my tears, and returned to the convent more ineffably miserable.

In this manner had I lingered on for three long years, a life of misery without the least alloy, when the bell summoned me to assist at the last moments of a brother. He was

was lying on a plank strewed with ashes and receiving the extreme unction, when he begged permission to break silence.—

“ What I shall say my father (addressing himself to the principal of our society) will animate my auditors with new fervour towards the Almighty; who by ways the most extraordinary, has snatched me from a gulph of misery to steer me into the harbour of eternal salvation.”—

He thus proceeded,—

“ I dis-

“ I disgrace the name of brother,
“ with which these holy men have
“ honoured me. In me, behold—
“ a wretched, sinful woman. Whom
“ love, unholy love, conducted hi-
“ ther.—I loved and was beloved
“ by a man of equal rank. But
“ the animosity of our parents
“ was a fatal obstacle to our union,
“ and I was obliged for the welfare of
“ my lover to give my hand a rebel
“ to my heart. Even in the choice
“ of a husband, I sought only to give
“ a proof of the extravagance of my
“ passion: and he who could inspire
“ hate alone, was to obviate my
“ lover’s jealousy, to all unworthily
“ pre-

“ preferred. But it was the will of
“ the Almighty, that a marriage thus
“ contracted with views so criminal,
“ should be to me an uninterrupted
“ source of misery. Behold ! my
“ husband and my lover, by each
“ other wounded, bleeding before
“ my eyes ! A scene so shocking threw
“ me into a fever ; from which I was
“ scarce recovered, when my husband
“ immured me in a dungeon, and
“ made report declare me dead. In
“ this place of horror I lingered out
“ two years, to every consolation alike
“ a stranger. My husband, unsated
“ with my sufferings, had the cruelty
“ to add insult to misery. What do
“ I say ?

“ I say? —— My God! dare I brand
“ with cruelty the instrument you
“ thought meet to be my punishment!
“ My miseries, heavy as they were,
“ opened not my eyes to my errors;
“ when I should have wept my sins,
“ I could only lament my lover. ——
“ The death of my husband at length
“ procured my liberty. —— The do-
“ mestick who alone was conscious of
“ my fate, opened my prison; but at
“ the same time informed me, that
“ I had been reputed dead from the
“ first moment of my confinement.

“ The noise my adventure would
“ occasion, determined me on retire-
“ ment;

“ ment; a resolution I the more
“ readily embraced, as all my in-
“ quiries were fruitless after the only
“ person for whom I wished to live;
“ That I might the more easily steal
“ unnoticed from the castle, I dis-
“ guised myself in the habit of a
“ man, in which I purposed travelling
“ to a convent in the neighbourhood
“ of Paris. I was hastening thither,
“ when a secret impulse, as I passed
“ this seat of religion, obliged me
“ to enter your chapel. On the instant
“ of my entrance I distinguished in
“ the fulness of the anthem, a voice
“ too well accustomed to sink into
“ my heart. I believed myself se-
“ duced

“duced by the powers of imagina-
“tion.—I drew near, and through all
“the changes which time and austere-
“ties had made on his countenance,
“I recognized the man so dear to
“my memory. My God ! how vio-
“lent were my agitations ! how im-
“pious were my thoughts ! I dared
“blaspheme the author of my being
“for seducing my lover from me.
“You punished not my impious
“murmurs, O my God ! but made
“my miseries promote my eternal
“welfare. I could not force myself
“from the place, which held my
“very soul. And that I no more
“might lose him, I offered myself to

M

“ you

" you my father for the habit. With
 " such earnestness I prayed admis-
 " tance, that you admitted me. How
 " did I perform your holy exercise !
 " A heart throbbing with guilty pas-
 " sion, my soul wrapped up in him I
 " loved.

" The Almighty by abandoning me
 " to myself, was willing to give me
 " more powerful reasons for my fu-
 " ture humiliation. He therefore
 " suffered me to taste the empoisoned
 " joys of breathing the same air, and
 " of being under the same roof with
 " him, who innocently had seduced
 " my soul from his holy presence.

" I

" I haunted my lover as his shadow;
 " I assisted his labours with all my
 " little strength, and in those mo-
 " ments was amply paid my every
 " trouble. My infatuation would
 " have led me to discover myself,
 " had I not been restrained by the
 " dread of interrupting the tran-
 " quillity of him, who had robbed
 " me of my repose. Yes—thou be-
 " nevolent author of my being, I
 " should have endeavoured to seduce
 " that soul which I believed wholly
 " thine!—

" At the expiration of two months
 " each man was obliged to dig his

“ grave, agreeable to the founder’s
“ institution, who by a perpetual
“ idea of death intended to render
“ holy the lives of his order.

“ I attended as usual on him to
“ whom I was bound by chains so
“ shameful. The sight of his grave,
“ and the zeal with which he dug it,
“ penetrated my heart with such a
“ lively sorrow, that to conceal my
“ weakness I was obliged to retire.
“ It seemed the very moment in
“ which I should for ever lose him.
“ This idea preyed on my imagina-
“ tion, and if I left him but a few
“ hours,

“ hours, I feared I should never see
“ him more.

“ Behold the happy moment
“ which God had prepared to win me
“ to himself! — We were cutting
“ wood in the forest for the supply
“ of the convent.—My lover had
“ unperceived escaped from me. My
“ solicitude prompted me to search
“ for him through all the mazes of
“ the wood; at last I espied him in
“ a part the most retired, poring
“ over some thing which hung at his
“ bosom. His attention was so ab-
“ sorbed, that I drew near unnoticed,
“ and surveyed the object of his con-

M 3 “ temption.

" temptation. How inexpressible was
 " my amazement at seeing my own
 " picture. Then I perceived, that
 " so far from enjoying the repose I
 " dreaded to disturb, that he was like
 " myself, an unhappy victim to a
 " more unhappy passion.—Then did
 " my imagination paint the Almighty
 " in his anger ready to lay his heavy
 " hand upon him. I trembled least
 " the love which I had impiously
 " carried with me to his holy altar,
 " should draw down the vengeance
 " of heaven on the unhappy object
 " of it. Full of this idea, I prostrated
 " myself before his holy shrine. I
 " prayed for my conversion, that I
 " might

“ might obtain it for my lover.—Yes
“ my God, it was for him alone I
“ offered you my prayers. It was
“ for him alone my tears were shed.
“ It was my anxiety for his happiness,
“ which made me a proselyte to
“ righteousness.—You looked down
“ with an eye of mercy on my weak-
“ ness. My prayers all insufficient,
“ all impious as they were, were
“ not rejected. An emanation of
“ your holy grace descended into my
“ heart. Then did I taste that peace
“ of mind, which souls dedicated to
“ thy service can alone enjoy.—

“ You

“ You willed by my sufferings to
“ add yet more to my purification.—
“ But hold.—I feel the hand of
“ death upon me.—If the com-
“ panion of my infatuation still la-
“ bours under the oppression of ini-
“ quity, let him reflect on the ob-
“ ject of his foolish passion, let him
“ cast his eye on me; let him think
“ on that tremendous moment which
“ now awaits me, and which he soon
“ must know. The period of my
“ existence is arrived; I implore the
“ prayers of these holy men; I request
“ their pardon for the offence I have
“ given, and I acknowledge myself
“ unworthy

" unworthy to partake of their se-
" pulture." —

Language cannot paint the feelings of my soul ; I experienced in that tremendous moment all the tenderness of love and agonizing horrors of despair. I was kneeling with the other religious, when first she spake ; the voice I instantly knew to be the voice of Adelaid ; but the fear of losing a single word she uttered, restrained my cries. When I found she was expired, I grew delirious with grief ; I sprung from the religious who had crowded to my assistance ; I threw myself on my knees, I seized her

her lifeless hand and bathed it with a torrent of tears.—“ Now I have for “ ever lost you; my dearest Adelaid “ was with me, and my heart un- “ grateful knew her not.—No— “ we will part no more.—Death “ less cruel than my father, shall “ unite us now for ever.”—

My holy brethren melted at this spectacle of woe, endeavoured by the most pathetic and christian exhortations to remove me from the body, which I held in my embrace. Force succeeded to entreaties, and I was confined in my cell.

The

The father Abbot attended me the whole night, and endeavoured to mitigate my sorrows, but he could not win on my affliction.

“ Restore me Adelaid, said I, why
“ have you separated us? No—I can-
“ not, will not live where she so much
“ has suffered. For pity’s sake per-
“ mit me to quit this place! What
“ would you with a wretch like me,
“ My despair will poison that tran-
“ quillity, which has ever flourished
“ here. Suffer me to retire to some
“ sequestered vale far from the haunts
“ of men. My Adelaid will inter-
“ cede with the Almighty for a re-
“ mission

“ miffion of my sins.—And you,
“ my father, be propitious to this
“ my last request. Promise me, that
“ the same tomb shall unite our ashes,
“ there we may sleep in peace.—I
“ in return most solemnly protest,
“ that I will not expedite that hour,
“ which can alone remove my
“ cares.”—

The father Abbot softened into pity, and willing probably to remove from the eye of his convent an object so disgraceful, yielded to my pressing importunities.

I instantly bade adieu to the Abbey of la Trappe, and came to this hermitage, where I have spent many years in no other employ, than in bewailing with tears my loss.——

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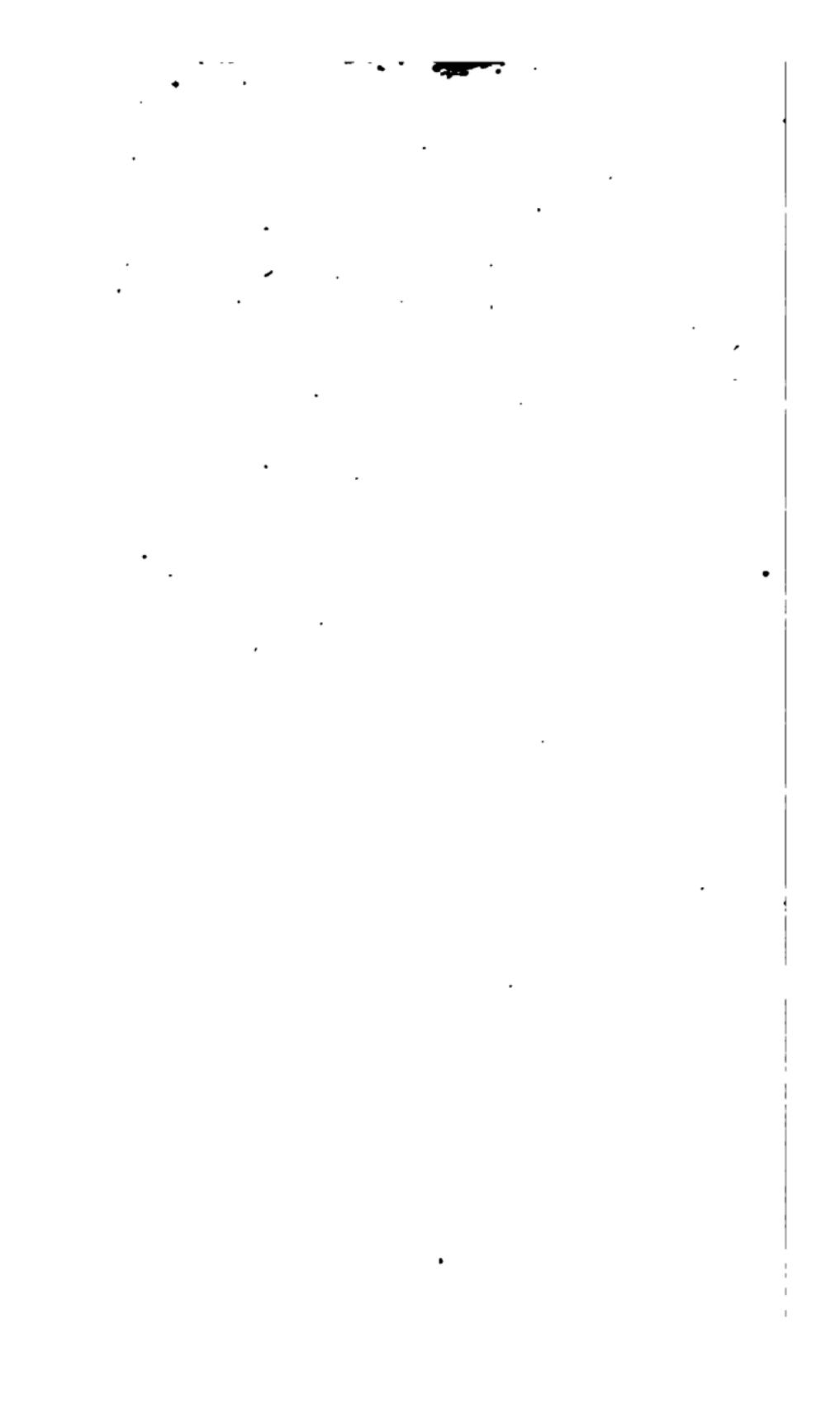
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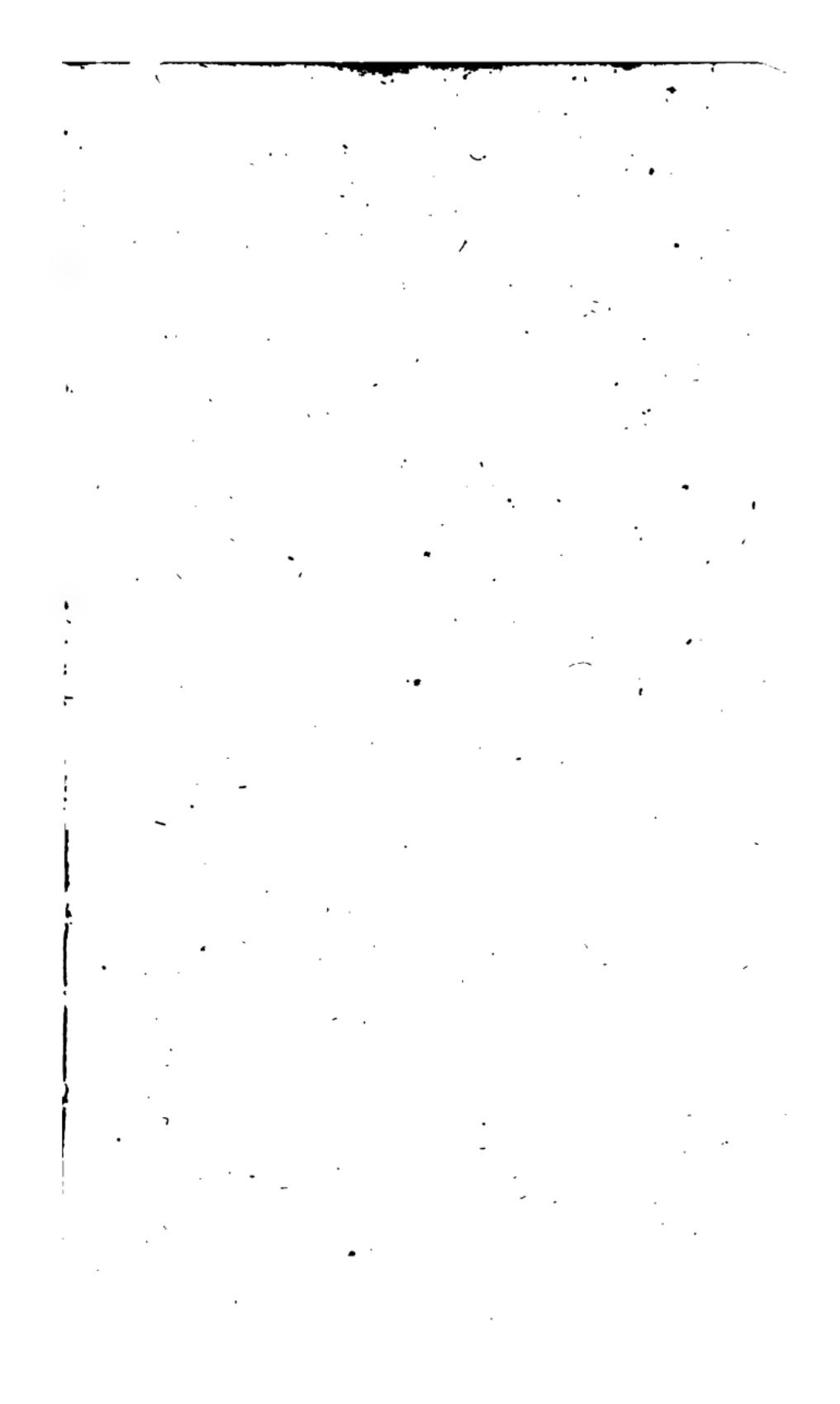
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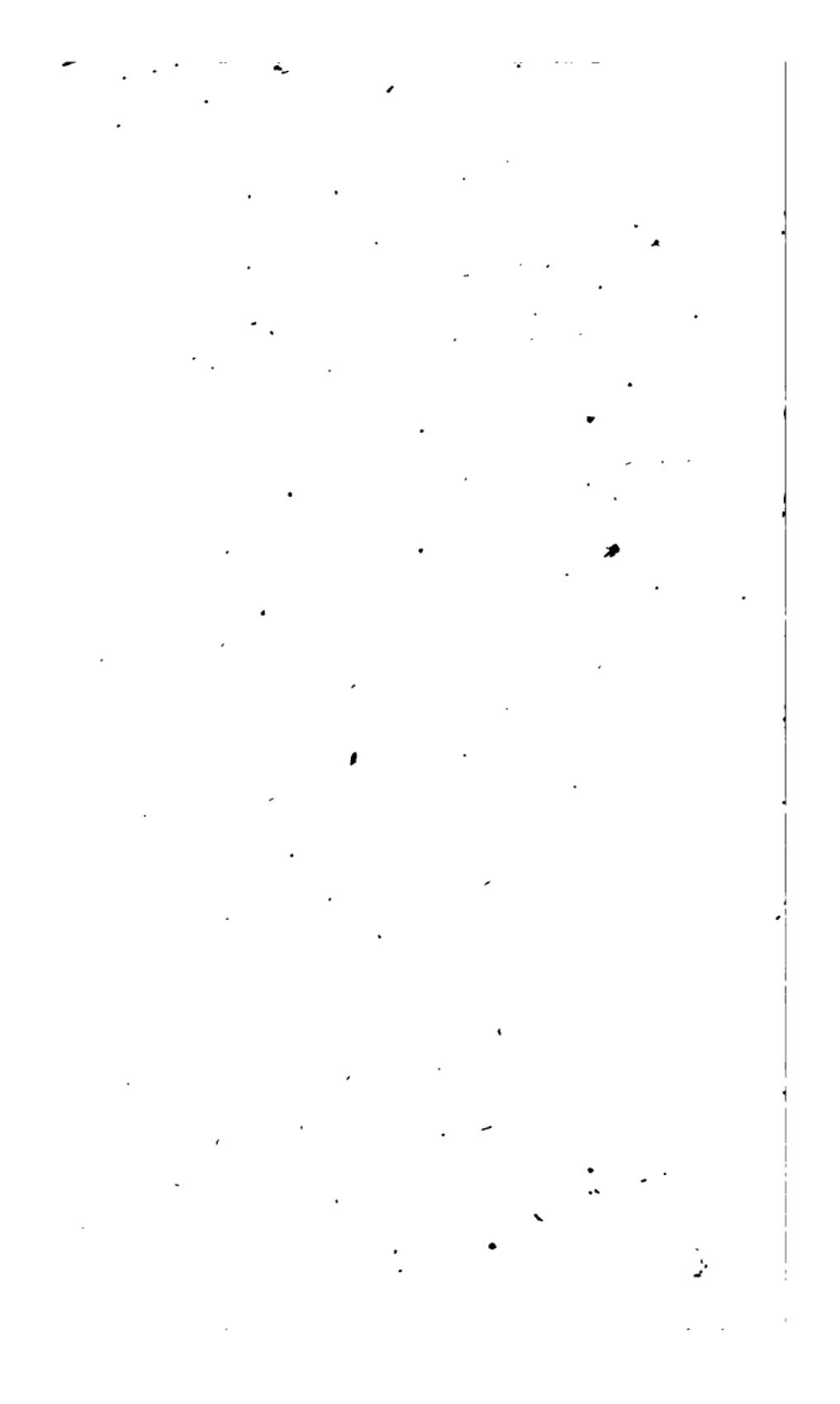
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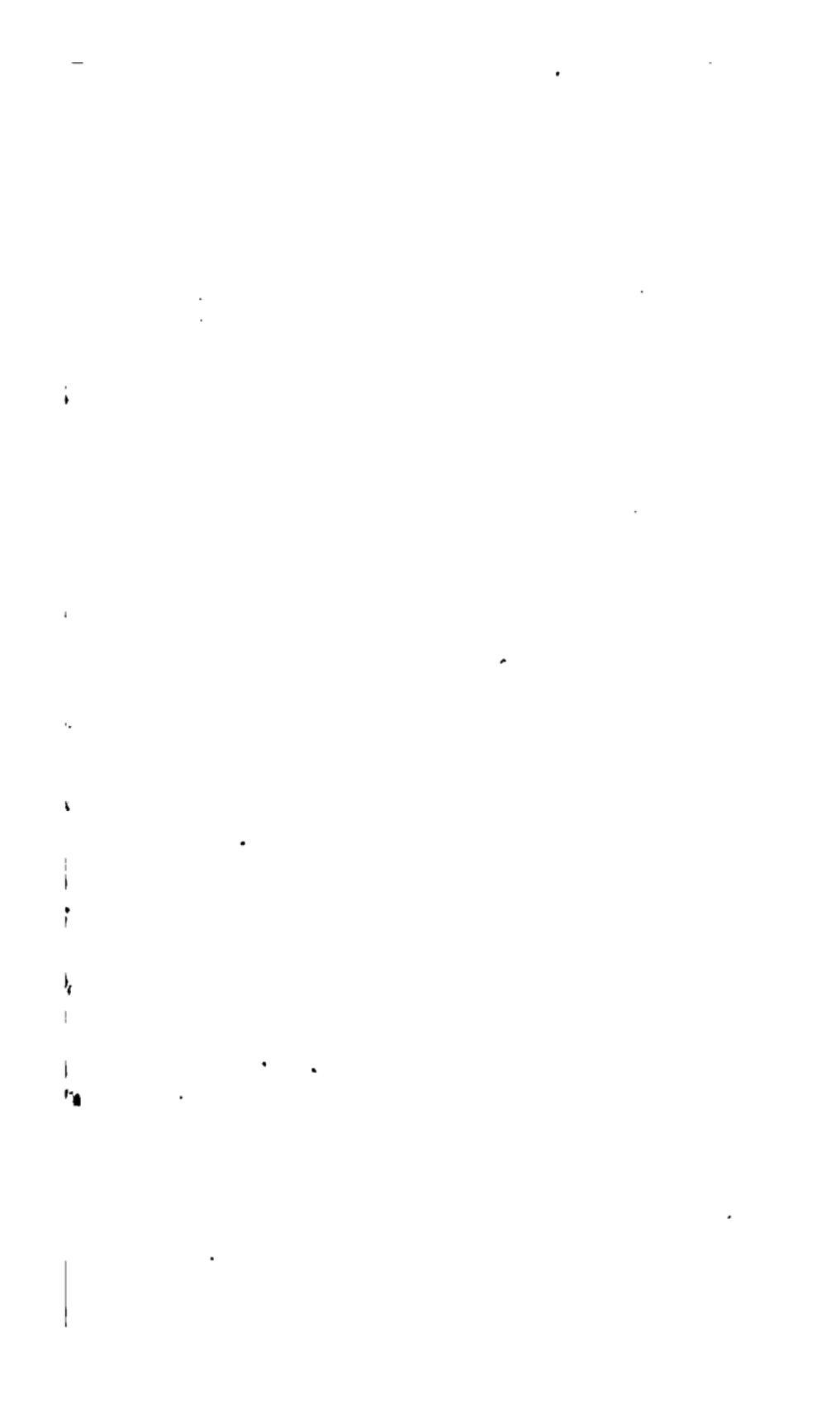
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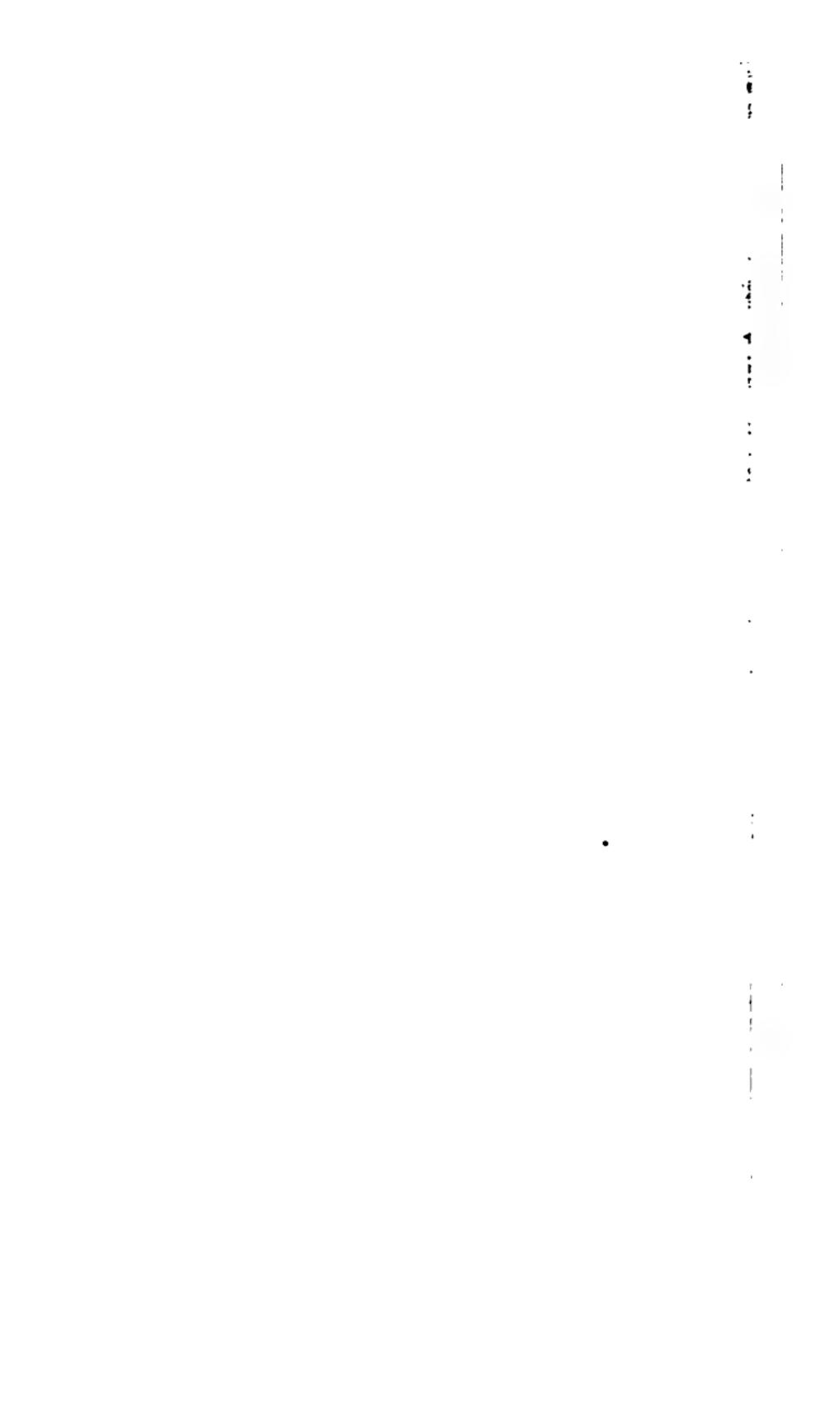
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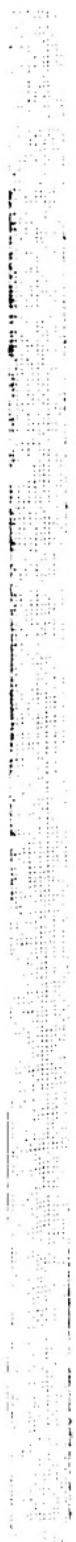


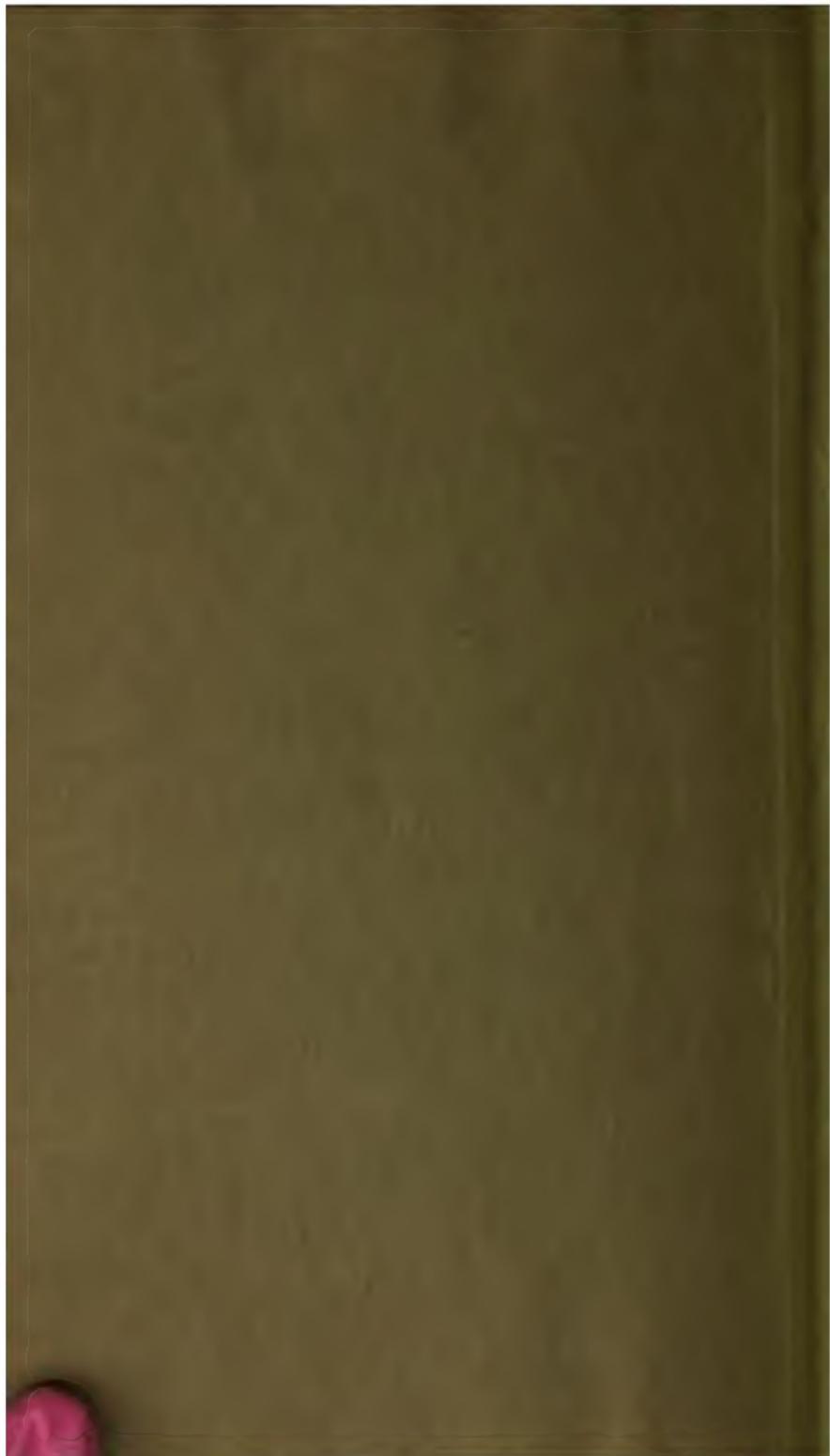












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